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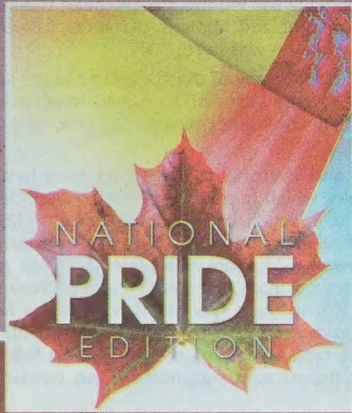
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OUTLOOKS

June

2007

COVER DESIGN
BY DIGITAL AVATAR



THIS ISSUE

editorial	6
don't you wish?	21
focus	26
community	28
interview	31
don't you wish?	49
classifieds	52
horoscope	53

Dallas Travel



Photo by Wayne Wolfe

Surprisingly, deep in the heart of world-famous George Bush's ranch country, amidst ominous dark clouds there's a ray of sunlight and a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow—gay-friendly Dallas, Texas.

22

14

Watching the boutique shoppers stroll by, I enjoy a cappuccino at Le Pain Quotidien on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles.

My daydreaming is soon interrupted by the handsome Robert Gant, best known for his role as Professor Ben Bruckner on *Queer as Folk*.



20

On December 2, 2006, the Honourable Stéphane Dion won the Liberal Party's leadership race on the fourth ballot, a surprising victory for someone who entered the race at fourth place, and who many pundits had written off.



Shane Golby
LITTLE MEN

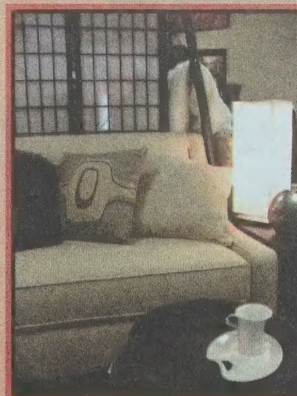
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Hellraiser

By John Coulbourn

Like most gay men in North America, I suspect, I wasn't exactly heart-broken at the news that the Rev. Jerry Falwell had finally gone to meet his maker.

In fact, the first thought that went through my mind on hearing of his death was: This should mean a major drop in the property values in Hell as heretofore contented sinners suddenly decide en masse to relocate, realizing that with Falwell's arrival, the entire neighbourhood is headed, you should pardon the expression, to hell in a handbasket.

That notion was immediately followed, I might add, by a wave of extreme nostalgia for the old time religion that marked my youth, for surely, it would be hugely entertaining—rapturous, some might say—to watch Falwell explain his unique brand of down-home and folksy bigotry to a personal saviour who had not only exhorted his followers to do unto others “as you would have them do

unto you”, but who specifically threw in an injunction to judge not, lest ye be judged, just for good measure.

So in the end, I probably spent just about as much time, mourning the passing of Jerry Falwell as he did the passing of Matthew Shepherd—or for, that matter, the legion of gay men who died from AIDS over the years—and I suspect I felt considerably more sympathy for those who now mourn his passing than he ever did for the families of those same men.

That said, I have to admit that Falwell's passing got me to thinking—and even I'm a little surprised at just where that thinking has led me, for I've been thinking that, while the world is likely a more tolerant and humane place for Falwell's leaving it, he certainly served a purpose while he was here.

In fact, when you really stop to think about it, many of the advances the gay and lesbian community has made in the past twenty years or so can be credited in some small way to Falwell and his wrong-headed determination to mix religion and politics.

Certainly, Falwell's anti-gay ramblings and rhetoric did much to earn him a following in the fundamentalist community, which is precisely what he intended. But at the same time, they underlined to a much broader audience just how dangerous and lethal the combination of religion and politics can be. In catering to the lunacy of his most extreme followers—in denouncing Teletubbies as gay icons and blaming everyone who had strayed from the straight and narrow as defined by Falwell for the attack on the World Trade Center, to name but a few of his more extreme ravings—Falwell gave credence to the gay community's claims of persecution and underlined the fact, at least to the reasonable folk in our midst, that our exclusion from the mainstream was nothing but outdated prejudice from another time.

And I'm thinking that in the end, he wasn't simply a motivational speaker to the extreme right wing, but to a much broader audience as well. Consider: Without people like Falwell on hand, it seems to me that liberalism—at least of the small “l” variety—is the closest thing in the world to a self-defeating political ideology mankind has ever developed, marked as it is by a usually genuine desire for all of us to simply live and let live, within certain proscribed limitations of course.

It's not important to the average liberal that you agree with him, as long as you give him the freedom to live his life according to his beliefs, which is precisely the same thing he'll offer you in return. So, while your average, garden-variety liberal may have absolutely nothing against same sex behaviour or relationships, chances are, he or she isn't going to rush to the barricades to defend the right of people who exhibit that behaviour or cultivate those relationships, particularly if there is no sense of urgency to the debate that's being conducted.

So what if religious zealots disapprove of homosexuality, the reasoning goes, so long as it's not interfering in any major way with a homosexual's rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and nobody's actually getting hurt?

For years, the religious right was content to fly beneath the radar and conduct what was, in essence, a guerilla war against the sins of Sodom and the sinners who not only practiced it but were pretty damn good at it, to boot, and your average liberal was content to stay out of the argument, unsure whether it was a debate about freedom of religion, freedom of speech or just the freedom to be you and me, to quote new age philosophy.

Then Falwell came along, determined to marry politics and religion.

By forging what he called the moral majority—and the bumper stickers that read: “The Moral Majority is neither!” were spot on the money—Falwell changed that dynamic for all time, underlining to a much broader world that a nation that promises freedom of religion must also protect its rights to freedom from religion. He also scared the bejesus out of the live-and-let-live crowd in the process—after first waking that crowd up, of course.

And it was in Falwell's extreme ramblings that many heard that wake-up call, sensing that raving about a gay agenda in characters created for a children's show or casting a senseless act of terrorism as the punishment of a vengeful God on a sinful nation was something very much akin to a new McCarthy-ism.

For every convert Falwell won to his cause, it is safe to assume he awoke one slumbering liberal and rendered that liberal a whole lot more vigilant in protecting him/herself from the horrible spectre of theocracy.

So, in the end, Falwell set out to change the world—and he did, for even before his death, commentators were commenting on the decline of the religious right's influence. The fact that he didn't change it in the way he wanted could be considered a tragedy in some circles, I suppose, but it could also be considered divine intervention. It all depends on how you look at it. ▼

John Coulbourn is a native Albertan who lived for many years in Calgary. He now makes his home in Toronto, where he covers performing arts for the Toronto Sun.

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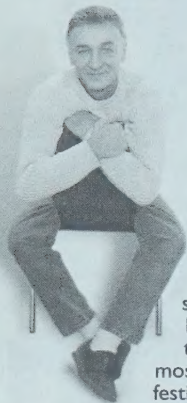
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GLOBAL PRIDE

By Roy Heale

Once again here it is the month of June and the summer season is almost upon us, hopefully bringing hot sunny days but definitely heralding Pride celebrations all across Canada. During June, July and August most Canadian cities—large or small—will hold Pride festivities as a part of their annual summer rituals.

However, it's also important to remember that Pride is a global affair and the GLBT communities around the world all have one thing in common—hardworking volunteers who work year-round to make sure that parades, parties, dances and other activities are available for us all to enjoy at Pride time. During my travels I am fortunate enough to meet Pride organisers from many different cities and they are all dedicated individuals who work hard to improve gay life in their community.

This month *Outlooks* includes stories from our writers in different regions about their local Pride activities. Hopefully this will assist you with your own plans for celebrating Pride where you live, or in another city as part of your summer vacation, or perhaps returning to your roots. Each year our Pride coverage expands and it seems to be a sign that Pride is alive and thriving despite the difficulties that many organisations face with funding and co-operation from local municipalities. When you are participating in this year's celebrations take a moment to think about all the hard work that went into making these events possible for you to enjoy.

It's also important to recognise the ways in which our Canadian Pride organisers are playing a role on the international stage with Interpride—the International Association of Pride Organisers. Our story on page 32 will explain our role in the global world of Pride, and Fierté Canada Pride will help to grow Canada's role in the future.

If you're planning on attending Vancouver's Pride this year then you will have a chance to welcome the co-founders of Moscow's Pride who will be this year's Vancouver Pride Parade Grand Marshals. Currently Moscow's Pride organisers are embroiled in a Supreme Court battle in their country to allow a start-up Pride event in their city. Imagine a battle just to hold a Pride event, which so many of us take for granted as a part of our rights and freedoms.

So, wherever you are this summer, Happy Pride from everyone here at *Outlooks*. ▼

Although we have tried to ensure accuracy for all Pride events across the country, we recommend checking local websites in case of any last minute changes.



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If you have some energy left after all the Pride festivities then dust off your cowboy boots, pull out the denim duds and plan to attend the Fourteenth Annual CRIR at Symons Valley Ranch, just on the edge of Calgary, June 29 to July 1. This annual western Canadian tradition continues to grow in popularity each year and is always a guaranteed good time.

This year's Grand Marshall is Jamie Cumberland, hot on the trail from his recent fame and fortune on TV's *Deal Or No Deal* where he successfully garnered huge attention and awareness for gay rodeos as well as winning \$131,000 for himself. It should be interesting to see who's at the rodeo this year!

The traditional Friday showcase will follow in the established footsteps of great country hospitality including Canadian country band Emerson Drive as the headline entertainers. The Saturday night Barn Dance will continue as Alberta's largest gay dance with upwards of 1500 foot-stomping revellers enjoying a great party. Add to these activities the rodeo competitions and other festivities making a great weekend for all to enjoy.

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PRIDE VANCOUVER

Pride in the City

By Josh Murray

If we are to believe the stereotypes of greeting cards, turning twenty-nine signals the start of twelve final months of youthful exhilaration and celebratory fun. The Vancouver Pride Society, for one, is a testament to this promising, if oversimplified, hallmark sentiment—and the word is spreading.

"Vancouver's celebrations are recognized as world class in a city that is unlike any other, with support from a community unlike any other," explains VPS President John Boychuk. "We are not only fortunate, but proud of what we have here—and people want to be part of that."

In 2006, Vancouver's much-admired celebrations attracted an astonishing 300,000 supporters to the parade route—up dramatically from the tally one year earlier. 2007's numbers are expected to spike even further with an historical Pride in the City theme. "Pride in the City represents human rights in 2007," explains Boychuk. "Vancouver Pride is working with Heritage of Pride New York, recognizing GLBT history, where Stonewall created a freedom revolution that we now enjoy."

With Canada at the forefront of gay rights on an international scale, looking back to acknowledge the significance of New York's substantial influence is important to the VPS—as is looking ahead to help others. "To ensure we do not forget and take these basic rights for granted, we have chosen Moscow, Russia as our 2007 sister city." While revelers in Vancouver are celebrating in the streets, Boychuk wants them to support those that are still barred from doing the same on the other side of the globe. "In Moscow, the local pride organizers cannot even get a permit to walk down the street. Their own mayor forbids the movement!" he explains. "Hate and intolerance toward the GLBT community continually threaten the lives of those who choose to be out." So the VPS theme is an important one to the west coast's largest community of pride attendees. "Vancouver represents the now. We are able to celebrate our freedom and rights without persecution and we want to remind people of what it has taken to get where we are today—New York, our past. And, as a global community, we need to lend support to regions where basic human rights are not recognized—Moscow, our future."

The annual pride parade and festival are perhaps the greatest examples of this encompassing, cohesive celebration on BC's west coast. "Vancouver Pride acts as the umbrella organization where all are welcome in a public space to learn, share and catch up with people you only see once a year," says Boychuk. Over the August long weekend, the parade route will again wind down Denman Street and Beach Avenue, with the festival following shortly thereafter at Sunset Beach. Despite the historic focus on Vancouver's West End, pride celebrations all over the city are becoming increasingly popular events on the calendar. "Vancouver Pride is a representation of the entire city and we look to ensure that we include many of the neighbourhoods within the city. This way, people are...able to attend events that are in their own backyards," says Boychuk.

The celebrations kick off at the East Side Pride Festival along Commercial Drive on June 30, with live entertainment, food and vendors. An East Side Pride Dance follows that evening.

Returning highlights later in the season: four Cruisy T boat excursions, including a jazz cruise up Indian Arm, and the popular Pride Party cruise on Sunday, August 6, and VPS' family-friendly Picnic in the Park on July 14.

As Pride continues to grow, so does the success of the at-times troubled VPS. While administrative issues plagued the not-for-profit group earlier this spring, they have re-grouped with added purpose and, thankfully, revenue. "We only keep enough monies in the bank to carry us through to the next year, ensuring the basic bills are covered. For the past two years, the VPS has given out funding through our Legacy Grants Program and we look to continue to assist local community organizations that have supported us over the years," explains Boychuk.

With such a rosy outlook for 2007, the VPS is already looking ahead—and striving. "These next few years will be crucial in developing a sustainable Pride that continues to be representative of the community, volunteer-based, supported, and, most importantly, in the black." The crowd control issue is also becoming a major hurdle for the organization, whose supporters are growing drastically as the GLBT community makes major strides politically and socially. "With the increase in crowds we need to look at our risk management. Our goal is to keep all of our events accessible and safe [while ensuring] residents in the

area are not inconvenienced," says the VPS President.

As Vancouver Pride 2007 promises another major celebration, it also lays the groundwork for a very incredible 2008. "Vancouver is a hot spot for the international GLBT traveler and, with the marketing and advertising programs we have in place, we expect that, in the next few years, pride parade attendance will grow to 500,000 spectators and participants," says Boychuk. With twenty-nine candles on the cake this year, Vancouver's Pride celebrations are just ramping up with popular events and even bigger plans for the next decade. Forget birthday greetings! A thank you card is probably in order. ▼

Visit vancouverpride.ca for all the up to date information.

Josh Murray is a freelance writer. His own daily blog, ohmyjosh.ca, focuses on celebrity and news items—with a Canadian slant.



PRIDE OKANAGAN

By Outlooks Staff

Celebrating diversity is the theme of this year's Gay Pride Festival in Kelowna. The city of Kelowna's Mayor, Sharon Shepherd, made it official with a City Proclamation declaring June 23 to July 1 Kelowna Pride Festival Week.

While many people associate Pride with a big colourful parade, the Kelowna Pride committee has opted for a longer, more diverse program that promises something for everyone. The Swirl Dance kicks off the Festival on June 23, and it is followed by events which include bowling, a family picnic, a night of music called Fruit Cocktail, a play, a cruise, a club night, and several other events throughout the city.

All community members are welcome to any Pride event but certain ones are targeted to the non-GLBT community as well. The first is a one-man show called *The Drag Queen That Time Forgot* for only two nights on June 27 and 28 in the Mary Irwin Theatre at the Rotary Centre for the Arts. The production comes from Buddies in Bad Times Theatre Company in Toronto and features actor Gordon MacKeracher.

Another special event is a July 1 Fireworks Cruise on Okanagan Lake on the Boardroom. The admission price includes appetisers and two decks to enjoy the great music and dance. Tickets for both *The Drag Queen That Time Forgot* and the Fireworks Cruise are available at Ticketmaster.

"Something for everyone" is also on the order for Fruit Cocktail, an annual program of music featuring headliners like Ellen Churchill and Reed Nykiforuk. This will take place at Ricardo's in Winfield on Tuesday, June 26. No advance tickets for this one, and seating is limited, so please call (250)766-6810 for reservations.

For information on any of these events, go to gayokanagan.com. For tickets to *The Drag Queen That Time Forgot* or the Fireworks Cruise, call (250)860-1470 or go online to ticketmaster.ca. ▼

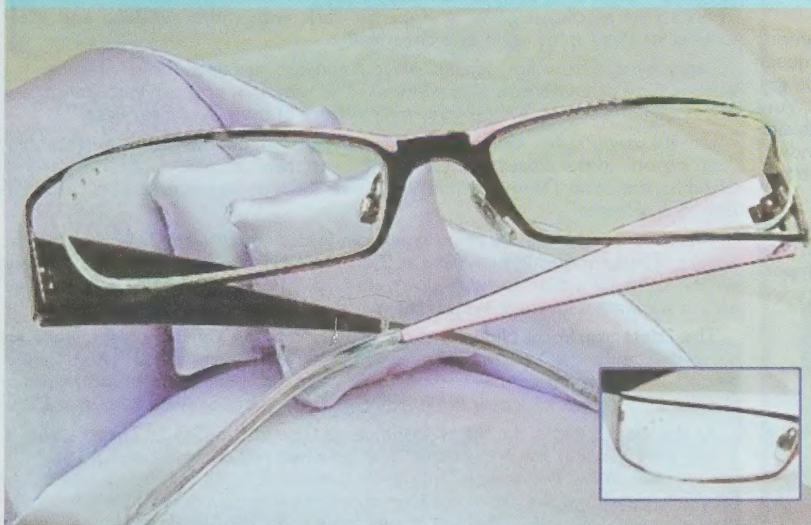


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PRIDE EDMONTON

By Jonathan Busch

Any dudes and dudettes looking to fully enjoy this year's Edmonton Pride Week festivities might have to book more time off work than they expected. From start to finish, it's a smorgasbord of hugs and excitement that reflects the festival as a significant part of the city's cultural integrity.

Recently, Edmonton Pride Week coordinator Sandi Stetson and board member Ken MacDonald met to draw up some of the details of what's to come. "This is the most packed Pride I've ever seen in this city," Ken says. "Groups seem to be coming out of the woodwork wanting to put things on this year. Literally, every day we have something programmed, and it's really eclectic."

It all kicks off with three Friday night events, the Annual Pride Awards, the raising of the Pride flag at City Hall and the Green with Envy Charity Ball 2007. "[The awards] provide a chance to recognize those who paved the way for this kind of Pride celebration to happen," Ken remarks. The flag raising is appropriately symbolic, happening the day before the parade, creating an unspoken beacon of cheer and anticipation to wish everyone a happy Pride. The city's administration, especially with the support of Michael Phair, has demonstrated the city's acceptance of Pride as a mainstream festival.

Then there's the parade on Saturday June 16, the once-little-and-infamous production down Jasper Avenue that includes anything and everything queer under one hopefully bright and shining sun. Obviously, you don't need to be gay, lesbian, or any of the rest of it to attend. Be proud, and you'll do just fine. And that's what we expect, downtown Edmonton to be loud, raucous, and law-abiding with guys, gals, chilluns, and pets that just can't get enough. "There's thousands of people on eight or nine city blocks," Sandi describes, "and all that energy transfers onto Churchill Square. It's a very powerful way to start the week."

The after-parade celebration is always a great time to enjoy the Business and Community Fair, live entertainment, and of course, beer gardens. On stage, drag veterans Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair will host an extravaganza of female impersonators, as well as a mix of other entertaining acts of the community. There will



also be lots of food vendors, and a Family Fun area. Later that night, Womanspace and Mr. Edmonton Leather will both be holding some hot parties.

On Sunday, the Mayor's brunch will be held, with His Worship Mayor Stephen Mandel in attendance. Notably, it's also a fundraiser for Camp Firefly (a summer camp for GLBTQ youth); there's hope that, like last year, tickets will sell out. There's also a softball game in Kinsmen Park, with more sunshine and likely Councillor Phair once again as a cheerleader.

Every year, Councillor Phair's office sponsors an open house highlighting various City of Edmonton Departments. This year, Edmonton Public Transit will be hosting at a local bus stop, informing visitors of their public services.

On Tuesday, PFLAG will hold a panel discussion on the issues surrounding "coming out of the closet as a parent of a gay child". In attendance, the parents of Edmonton icon Delwin Vriend will share their experience as part of GLBT history in Alberta.

Wednesday night will see Pride Week join forces with Metro Cinema to put on a night of out-and-proud teen films at Ziedler Hall in the Citadel Theatre. "There will be some films that normally don't get played [in Edmonton]," Ken says, "The idea is we want a leverage system for maybe a full festival of GLBT films."

The Edmonton Vocal Minority choir will perform on Thursday night, while an altogether different live performance happens on Friday. Local artist Trevor Anderson will be performing with his band against a background of local films at Ziedler Hall as part of a new Pride event, which will be followed by a dance.

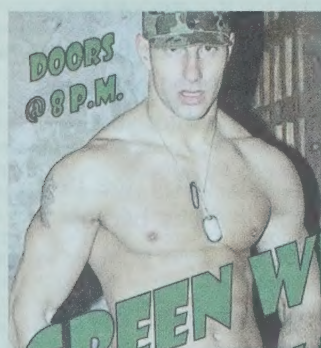
At the week's end is the big ol' Pride dance, also at the Citadel Theatre, with a James Bond Casino Royale theme. "This year we picked up an underlying 007 theme," Ken adds, "We want people to kind of pick that up for their float entries [at the parade], and the dance will have a casino, silent auction, and we encourage people to wear tuxedos." Perhaps at least during the parade we'll likely see more re-enactments of Daniel Craig's square cut swim brief scene than its gambling sequences.

Not only can you enjoy each of these fabulous events, Edmonton Pride Week could also make use of community volunteers. The parade and after-party will need a ton of people to offer their help, so while you're visiting their official website (see below) for details and updates on all the events, send an e-mail to learn how you can be involved. "You'll see a different part of the parade if you volunteer, and know that you were part of making it happen."

"Many of us want to support the diversity within our culture, and everyone is absolutely welcome," Sandi comments. "Last year was my first year being involved with Pride Week. I found it to be a lot of fun, but also emotionally and spiritually powerful. There are a lot of moving experiences that you can see."

So, get in the Pride loop—along with thousands of other enthusiastic human beings eager to celebrate our unique queer city. Go to prideedmonton.org or envycircuit.ca for other details, as well as to nominate any individuals you see as appropriate contenders for the 2007 Pride Awards.

Jonathan Busch is a student and freelance writer. He lives with his cat Mooshoo in downtown Edmonton.



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COME JOIN US AT THE 2007 PRIDE PARADE

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PRIDE CALGARY

By Sean McLennan

That time of year has come around again, and Calgary is prepared to show its pride colours in true western fashion, thanks to the efforts of the dedicated and hard-working board of the Pride Calgary Association. Let's give credit where credit is due and acknowledge them by name:

John Skorka, Chair and sponsorship coordinator

Mike Espeseth, Treasurer

Brox Anderson, Secretary and Street Gala Coordinator

Tawde Clark, Media, Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator

Angelina Re, Sponsorship, Pride Rights Summit Coordinator

Sharon Boutiller, Pride Parade Coordinator

If you happen across any of them (undoubtedly, they'll be looking a little harried) give 'em a smile, or "thank you" or little hug. Let 'em know they're appreciated!

Continuing the recent trend, Pride is increasingly more than the parade, and with the participation of many of Calgary's GLBT organizations, clubs, and businesses, there are a multitude of events planned over the course of Pride Month. Our enthusiasm just can't be contained in one day! There's more going on than can be summed up accurately here, so surf on over to pridecalgary.ca for your up-to-the-minute updates about what's going on, times and locations, and so forth. Nonetheless, here are some of the highlights of Pride Festival 2007.

June 2, Pride Kick Off Party

The official start of Pride Month—a not-to-be-missed party presented by Pride Calgary in conjunction with local arts, cultural, and community organizations to be held at The Backlot beginning at 4PM.



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June 8, Memory Walk

Once again, the Calgary Eagle will host a hot evening of the city's uniformed finest (or at least hot guys uniformed as the city's finest!). Whether your inclination is to command or take orders, you're likely to find a role to play.

June 15, Pride Parade and Street Gala

The unequivocal centerpiece of Pride Festival, the parade, will again be following the new route down Eighth Avenue, through Stephen Avenue. The end of the parade will kick-off the rest of the afternoon of entertainment and frivolity at the Street Gala in Olympic Plaza, the termination of the parade route. There will be vendors, performers, live music, a beer garden, The Family Zone, and more.

After the Parade and festivities you can also head to the Backlot for the annual tradition of their post-parade party.

June 16, Come to the Music

The Calgary Men's Chorus will hold their Pride concert at the Grand Theatre at 8PM. Tickets \$20 at the Grand Theatre or from chorus members.

June 16, Kiss 1001

The ever-popular pride dance—this year entitled "Forbidden Fruit"—will continue to push the envelope with a fusion of performance—a little drag, a little dance—with a rave-like environment of audience participation. This year it will be moving to the more intimate and central Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby in the Epcor Center.

This year's theme is "One: Celebrating Diversity By Unity". According to the Pride Calgary Chair, John Skorka, the idea behind the theme is to recognize that which we have in common—that draws us together in spite of the differences that enrich the GLBT community. Certainly a good message to put forward in this day and age!

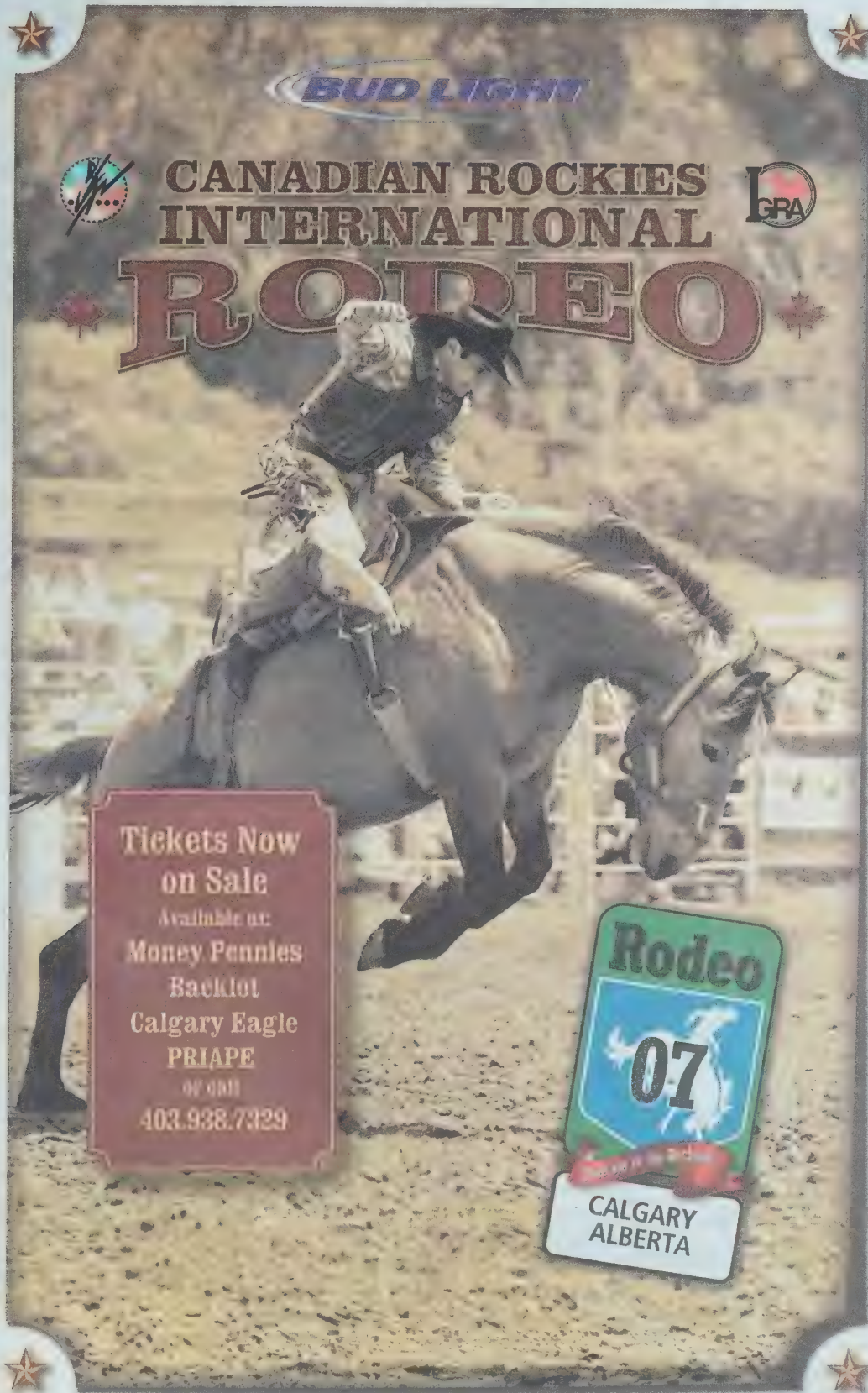
The Parade and Street Gala are expected to draw 2000 people or more—similar record-breaking numbers to last year, which was the first year the parade was moved to its new downtown route. Although some were sad to see the parade leave Seventeenth Avenue, the new location seems more fitting, has better visibility, better accommodates the crowds, better potential for growth, and interferes less with city traffic. According to John, it's also (perhaps surprisingly) easier and cheaper to run.

There was a minor kerfuffle over the date of the parade—originally it had been scheduled for June 3. It turns out another major event was going on at the Telus Conference Center and the city became concerned about the potential traffic chaos of the two events colliding. Even so, John says the situation was handled professionally, and only caused a minor inconvenience.

All in all, it should be an exhilarating day—let's hope it doesn't snow! And keep in mind that parade day is just the tip of the iceberg of a whole slew of events month-long—keep an eye out for the ARGRA rodeo, events from GLCSA and Apollo, and a fashion show intriguingly called "Kinky Boots". There have also been rumours of a John Wort Hammond concert and even a Calaway Park "Gay Day" a la Disney Land. At the time of writing, lots of details, dates and venues are still being finalized, so be sure to check out pridecalgary.ca before making your Pride plans! ▼

Sean McLennan is a native Calgarian with (nearly) a PhD in Linguistics and Cognitive Science from Indiana University, where he was heavily involved in GLBT education. He currently has a full time gig in software for mobile technology.

Photo by Outlooks staff



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The Greenroom with Charlie David



Watching the boutique shoppers stroll by, I enjoy a cappuccino at Le Pain Quotidien on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles. My daydreaming is soon interrupted by the handsome Robert Gant, best known for his role as Professor Ben Bruckner on *Queer as Folk*. Robert has hardly slowed down since wrapping the beloved GLBT series. Between running a production company, opening a film, leaving for New Zealand to shoot another and writing his acceptance speech for a GLAAD award that weekend, I was thrilled to catch him by his shirttails and ask a few questions.

Outlooks: What does it mean to you to be the recipient of the Davidson/Valentini Award from GLAAD this year?

Gant: At first it was almost a little embarrassing because I feel like it's not my time yet. I always feel like this is the kind of award that you get later on down the road, after you've been of service for a lifetime. As a result of *Queer as Folk*, I was able to be of service in a broad manner. I had to look at where there was the greatest need, as I perceive it. I'm looking at this as a call to even greater service. My focus has been on different things but the torch issue has been aging in the gay community. We've coalesced so beautifully around the AIDS crisis, we've flocked to gay youth to assist them. In a way this is the least sexy issue and I related to it because I think a lot of us have the fear of being old and alone. That's always resonated deeply for me. Healing happens by going in the direction of your fear and so I know that was the cause I needed to advocate.

Tribal cultures included their elders as an essential part of raising the village and in fact the elders were generally responsible for raising the young. We as a society have shifted that focus. I think our GLBT elders have a lot to do in terms of stepping into the shoes that they can fill and the younger generations have a lot to learn.

Outlooks: Your production company, Mythgarden, premiered the film *Save Me* at the Sundance Film Festival this year. How did you feel having the film received at such a high profile festival?

Gant: It was pretty amazing, particularly from the standpoint that it was our first production. It was a real honor. And the way in which the Christian community received it was astounding. Our goal was to create a conversation that might open a possibility for change. It's one thing to have that goal and it's another to start seeing it being realized. And the day after the program on some Christian websites there were bloggers who wrote that they had left the theatre wrecked. [One man wrote] that there had been grown men around him sobbing. Given the portrayal of the woman who runs the gay ministry, played by Judith Light, he said it seems that there are some gay people today who are more compassionate to Evangelical Christians than we are to them. And he said, "Are we as a Christian community ready to own up to the damage that we have caused these people?" There were a lot of tears on our side, realizing that our film had resonated in this way. We were then invited to speak at an Evangelical Seminaries conference and after our dialogue we had people coming up saying the most amazing things. Apologies from a very heartfelt place. It was very powerful.

Outlooks: Are you continuing on the film festival circuit with the film or preparing for distribution?

Gant: *Save Me* will be released in the fall. We will be doing a few more film festivals and there will also be a screening on the Queen Mary II New York to London cruise and we'll be there for the screening and doing a panel discussion after.

Outlooks: You own Mythgarden with Chad Allen, Craig Dougherty and Christopher Racster. What kinds of stories excite you guys?

Gant: The common element is that we're drawn towards smart stories, things that turn the page and tell the next stage of the GLBT community. Also projects that we call *Queer-centric*, that reflect universal themes and that embrace the fact that our community is not as ghettoized as it used to be. And we do accept scripts that are represented and submitted through lawyers or agents.

Outlooks: You have a trip coming up to New Zealand. Tell me about the project.

Gant: Well I can't give out details yet, other than I'll be shooting a project for *here!* TV...you'll find out soon. It's an action project that will be very cool and then I have a project in development with *LOGO* that's comedy, like a single camera sitcom so it will be nice to flex my acting muscles in both those directions.

Outlooks: You shot *Queer as Folk* in Toronto, which doubled for Pittsburgh. What was your experience like shooting in the Great White North?

Gant: I really loved it. I fell in love with Canada and one Canadian while I was up there and I think Canadians have awesome spirit and a great energy. They made it a wonderful experience for us. I'm excited to go back.



Outlooks: I'm going to go out on a limb and say we sure wouldn't mind seeing his handsome face in our neck of the woods again either. ▼

For more information on Robert's causes visit:

Senior Advocacy for GLBT Elders: ageusa.org

Gay and Lesbian Elder Housing: GLEH.org

For more information on Robert's upcoming projects visit:

robertgant.com and mythgarden.com

Charlie David is an actor and co-host of *Bump!* on OUTtv

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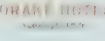
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PRIDE

LOVED IN REGINA

By Rick Pollard

The theme of Regina Pride Week 2007 is "You Are Loved".

"Most of us grow up believing we're not going to find love, that we don't belong anywhere," explains Regina Pride Committee spokesperson Mirtha Rivera. "Our committee wants people to feel that they have a place in the community, a safe space where they can feel welcome."

Rivera notes that, when most people come out, they go through a second adolescence, no matter what their age. The long-suppressed need to be liked and accepted resurfaces with a vengeance. The result is that many people are ignored and made to feel invisible. She admits, "We all find ourselves acting like this when we first come out. We want to belong so badly, and we tend to sacrifice some people in order to make the people we want to like us feel comfortable."

"We need to take a look around us, and realize that we're all here for the same reason. And, if we want to be accepted by society, we have to start by accepting each other."

Sunday, June 17, 2007: The week kicks off with the traditional Fathers' Day picnic sponsored by Pink Triangle Community Services and PFLAG Regina. It will be an afternoon of face-painting, frisbees, franks, fellowship and fun in Regina's Kiwanis or Waterfall Park off the corner of Regina Avenue and Elphinstone Street. Even if you can't answer the question, "Who's your daddy?", the picnic is always a pleasant way to pass the time on a hot summer afternoon.

Monday, June 18, 2007: Pride Week officially begins with the flag-raising ceremony at noon at Regina City Hall. For those who can't get downtown in the middle of their workday, there will also be opening ceremonies in the evening at the GLCR Community Centre, 2070 Broad Street. Dignitaries have been invited to both.



Tuesday, June 19, 2007: This evening will be an opportunity for Regina's queer community to reflect on its past, and lay the foundation for its future. At 6:30 PM, the Pride Committee is sponsoring Professor James McNinch of the University of Regina, who will lead the forum, "How to Queer Our Society". It's a safe bet that the discussion will move well beyond tips on tasteful decorating. Professor McNinch will tackle many of the serious issues facing a community that has made tremendous progress in winning legal equality but has not yet succeeded in completely changing attitudes or making our communities safe places for queer people.

Following the forum will be the annual Coming Out Party, a fixture of Regina Pride Week celebrations—and arguably its most successful event. Some of the stories will make you cry, some will make you uncomfortable, and many will make you laugh out loud. More than any other event, the Coming Out Party reminds queer people of how much they have in common, and helps to build solidarity within the community.

Both events will take place at the Saskatchewan Film Pool Co-operative, #301, 1822 Scarth Street. That's on the Scarth Street Mall, just south of the Cornwall Centre.

Wednesday, June 20, 2007: The hosts of the queer community radio show, *Out on the Air*, again sponsor the annual Rainbow Pride Cinema. The popular movie night will take place at the Saskatchewan Film Pool Co-op starting at 7 PM and continue for as long as there is interest. The hosts promise a mix between gay and lesbian movies, a balance between the serious and absurd, and "absolutely no coming out movies".

Thursday, June 21, 2007: The Women's Coffee House will be held at the GLCR Community Centre, 2070 Broad Street. It's a chance for the grrlz in the community to strut their stuff, and if past experience is any indication, it should be an eclectic mix. Men are welcome as observers. This event gets underway at 7 PM.

At 9 PM, people with lots of talent and people who have consumed lots of drinks get equal billing at Pride Karaoke. Video may have killed the radio star, but the karaoke idols are still alive and kicking!

Friday, June 22, 2007: The GLCR Community Centre pays host to the White Party starting at 9:00 PM. It promises to be an evening of dance, DJs and drink specials.

Saturday, June 23, 2007: The annual Pride Parade begins in the GLCR parking lot at 11:30 AM, journeys to the legislature and returns to the GLCR for a barbecue in the afternoon. The festivities resume at 7 PM with the Annual Pride Awards, followed by the Pride Dance Cabaret, also at the GLCR.

Sunday, June 24, 2007: Pride Week concludes with a new event, the Medieval Feast and Joust, hosted by the Society for Creative Anachronisms. Every organization involved with hosting Pride Week will constitute a House, and will select from among their number a champion who will compete in the joust.

There will also be a stockade for malcontents who break the rules. "Houses can either pay to get their member released," explains Rivera, "or they can pay to keep them in the stockade."

The event is a fundraiser for Pride Week 2008. Tickets are \$25.

Most other Pride Week events will have free admission but donations will be gratefully accepted.

For more information, contact the GLCR at (306) 569-1995 and ask for Mirtha or Ron. You can also send e-mails to atnemrot@hotmail.com. ▼

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PRIDE

SASKATOON

THE FIFTEENTH EDITION!

By Megan Morman

The fifteenth edition of the Saskatoon Pride Festival is in town June 9-17. This year brings some changes, including a more centrally located community fair venue, and brings back old favorites like Family Day in the Park.

Several pre-Pride events will set the stage for the packed week to come. The GALA Awards & Auction, a fundraiser for the Avenue Community Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity, is on Friday June 1 at the downtown Radisson Hotel. The theme is 'Carnevale'. Winnipeg-based artist Daniel Barrow will perform The Face of Everything at AKA Gallery on Friday, June 8 at 8PM.

Saskatoon's Pride festivities begin officially on Saturday, June 9 with Winnipeg Babysitter, a screening of selections from classic Manitoba public access television, curated by Barrow; the screening will be at the historic Roxy Theatre on 20th Street, and free to the public. On Saturday evening Diva's hosts Hollywood Squares Drag Edition. Contestants will be picked from the audience and compete for fabulous prizes.

Sunday, June 10 is packed with events for the whole family. The day begins with the Unitarian Congregation's annual Pride service, led by Anne Barker. The service will feature performances by the Bridge City Chorus and begin at 10:30AM at the Unitarian Church. At 2PM is Family Day in the Park, a free inter-generational BBQ and games day at Ashworth Holmes Park in the Caswell Hill neighbourhood. Family Day has had bad luck with the weather, having been cancelled due to thunderstorms twice in the past three years. Picnickers are advised to bring lawn chairs, bug spray and umbrellas. In the evening will be an all-ages drag show at Diva's.

The Festival's two art shows both open on Monday, June 11. The first, Stripped, is a traveling exhibition of GLBT-themed United Church stoles. Stripped will be in the basement auditorium of the Mendel Art Gallery until June 16. The second, That's So Gay 3, features art by eight contemporary artists who have been paired up to write about each other's work, including Cindy Baker, David Folk and Alison Track. That's So Gay 3 runs until June 22 at the University of Saskatchewan's Gordon Snelgrove Gallery.

Also on Monday are the annual flag raising ceremony at 10AM at City Hall, and Gay Latté. Mystery novelist Anthony Bidulka and other writers and poets will read during the 6PM literary cabaret at McNally Robinson. Seating is limited, so come early or reserve a table.

Due to the closure of its long-time sponsoring venue, there will be no Lipstick & Balls Pool Tournament this year. In its place on Tuesday, June 12 will be Drag Queen Bingo, featuring the BVDs: Bingo Verification Divas. Events organized by PFLAG and the New Democratic Party are also scheduled for Tuesday evening. Wednesday night's carless drive-in at Friendship Park is a double feature: *Mary Poppins* and *Todd Graff's Camp*. Can't bowl straight? Queer-O-Rama is at Rak's Pin House on Thursday, June 14.

There's also a walking Martini Crawl on Thursday. Martini-goers will begin at the 2nd Avenue Grill and work their way through downtown lounges, ending at Diva's.

On Friday, June 15 receptions for both Stripped and That's So Gay 3 begin at 7PM. Once you've had your fill of wine and cheese, High Energy—the biggest drag show of the year—starts at 10PM at Diva's.

Saturday's the big day at the Saskatoon Pride Festival. The Community Fair has a new venue this year. It moves from Kiwanis Park to the square outside City Hall. Pride Chair Nich Fraser explains, "The city instituted a new rule mandating a one week rest period between major events in the park." As a result, the Fair was evicted from its six-year home by the river. "Pride wasn't the only event affected," reassures Fraser, "A Taste of Saskatchewan decided to push its dates back one week rather than give up their space in Kiwanis. Pride didn't have that flexibility."

The new Community Fair venue means a new parade route as well. The Saskatoon Pride Parade launches at noon from City Hall and makes a circle through downtown. It travels south on 3rd Avenue until 20th Street, and then loops back on 1st Avenue until 24th Street. Despite the trend toward Prides



instituting entrance fees for their parades, participation in the Saskatoon Pride Parade is free for everyone. Organisers expect about twenty-five organized entries, including a dozen floats and other vehicles. The bulk of the Parade is made up with giddy rainbow-bedecked people who couldn't stand just being spectators. Businesses and entries with motorized vehicles must register. Contact nich@saskatoonpride.ca for information.

The Community Fair begins immediately after the Parade arrives back at City Hall, including craft booths, displays from local non-profits, beverage garden, and a variety of food vendors. Entertainment runs all afternoon and will feature local singer-songwriters Megan Lane and Carrie Catherine, and Toronto's R Kelly Clipperton. In the evening, there will be a Pride Dance on the patio at Louis' Pub on the University of Saskatchewan Campus.

Finally, it'll be worth dragging yourself out of bed for the volunteer appreciation brunch on the morning of Sunday, June 17. You don't have to be a volunteer to attend. The adventurous can round off the Festival with the Paintball Tournament, organized by the USSU Pride Centre.

Saskatoon isn't the only Pride in northern Saskatchewan this year. Prince Albert's first Pride Parade is scheduled for Saturday, June 9. Last summer youth activists in the community of 42,000 received a grant from the provincial government to organize the event. Despite uncertainty at Prince Albert's city council, in April the group received their proclamation of Pride Day. Contact info@avenuecommunitycentre.ca for more information on how to participate.

Tickets for the dance and volunteer brunch go on sale at the beginning of June. For more information on the Saskatoon Pride Festival, including details about events, visit the Saskatoon Diversity Network's website: saskatoonpride.ca, call (306) 47-PRIDE, email info@saskatoonpride.ca, or look for an Official Pride Guide, available in queer-friendly places across the Prairies. ▼

Megan Morman is a Saskatoon-based freelance thing doer and fan of foreign candies. Visit her online at populust.ca

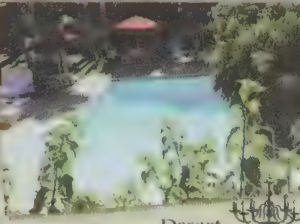
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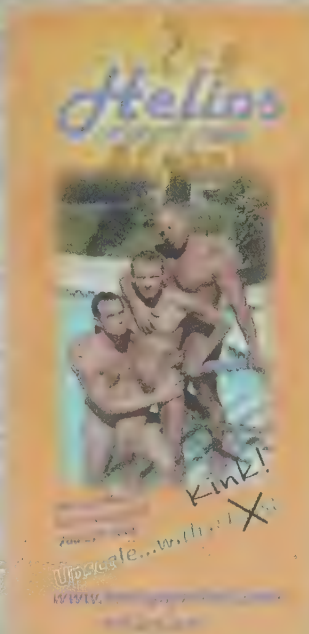


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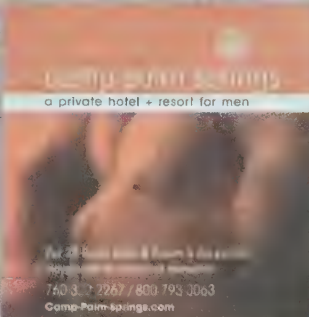


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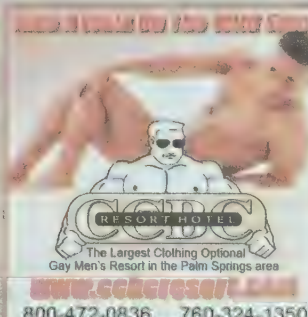
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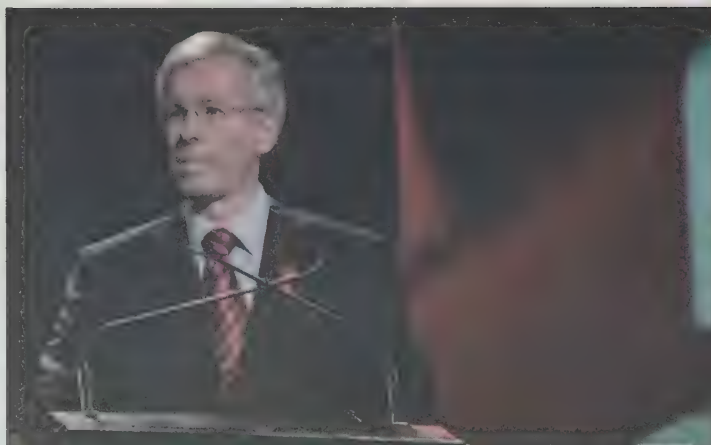


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Stéphane Dion's Vision for Canada

By Dale Smith

On December 2, 2006, the Honourable Stéphane Dion won the Liberal Party's leadership race on the fourth ballot, a surprising victory for someone who entered the race at fourth place, and who many pundits had written off. But Dion surprised everyone—the pundits, the party, the country, and now he is the eleventh leader of the Liberal Party of Canada.

From rather inauspicious beginnings, Dion was an academic who has a string of letters behind his name—BA, MA, PhD, along with the titles of MP and PC that he earned in his political career. From 1984 to 1996 he taught public administration at the Université de Montréal, until the call came to politics—quite literally over the phone.

In person, Dion is less of the willowy figure that he appears to be on television, and in fact looks much more solid, substantial—and taller—than I had expected him to be. He ushered me into his beautiful wood-panelled office in the Centre Block, and we sat down to talk about his transition from academia to politics.

"My studies convinced me to intervene more and more without necessarily being aware of it," Dion begins the tale. "In the debate about the unity of our country, I spoke about the case for Canada from a political science point of view—the federation is decentralised, Québec is not a victim, and there is a lot of improvements to make, but it is easier if together than if we are always about separation. During the last Referendum in 1995, Mr. Chrétien watched me, and in fact it was Madame Chrétien who convinced him to do that and invite me into politics. And after months of hesitation, I caved. I became Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs for eight years—no Canadian since Confederation has been longer Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs than me. I became the Minister of the Environment, and after Mr. Martin left, I was convinced to run, and I won. And now I am the leader, and I intend to be Prime Minister of this country to help my fellow citizens have a richer Canada, a fairer Canada, and a greener Canada."

As the story goes, Dion had only intended to be in Ottawa for a few years—fix a few things, and then retire to academia. "In fact, I was there for a mission," Dion says. "That mission was to be sure that Canada would not break up. Lucien Bouchard was tremendously popular at that time, he was charismatic, support for separation was going up and up and up, and Québec bashing was everywhere. I thought that this is unacceptable, because the world needs more Canadas, and we're trying to destroy the one we have. And what is Canada? Canada is a country where people of different languages, cultures and backgrounds build something stronger and better because they are together. We learn to be more tolerant, open and better citizens because we have to adjust to others. I'm not saying that we're doing that perfectly—I just think that we're doing it better, in a better way than most other countries in the world. We are on the podium of tolerance, and it's what we need to improve always, and to help other countries, to invent their own Canada with their own institutions and their own way to be. But I believe in it, and that's why I said to my wife 'We'll help people to have the taste to stick together, and then we'll go back to university.' It took more time than expected, and also I developed a taste for political action for my fellow citizens. When Mr. Chrétien decided to leave, he made an announcement one year and a half before he left, and he was looking around to his more skilful ministers to help him to complete his agenda, so he involved me in about every file outside of unity and I enjoyed it so much, and I was well appreciated by colleagues and bureaucrats, that I decided to stay."

One could also say that he found a new mission, which has since become his calling card in the national—and international—spotlight. Like unity before, Dion



has become a champion of this new cause.

"When I became Minister of the Environment, my mission—the way I saw it—was to make sure that we not only had a greener society, but also a greener economy," Dion says. "The link between the economy and the environment would be stronger. I helped as the Minister of the Environment—as Prime Minister I would help much more. And today as leader of the Opposition, at least we are correcting the worst mistakes of this government, convincing the government to at least pretend they are doing something. Without us, I'm sure they would do completely nothing—they are not interested in this file at all."

But there is more to leading the Liberals than just the issue of the environment. Throughout his leadership campaign, Dion spoke about being in the Party of the Charter, and how important that was to him.

"Rights have always been important for me," he says. "My file in political science was public administration, and my original approach was to link the daily life of government—the bureaucratic aspect—with the great principles that liberal thinkers brought to humanity. So I'm a very practical

person. At the same time I've always respected the Charter of Rights."

Once Dion became leader of the party, he was faced almost immediately with the vote on re-opening the same-sex marriage debate that Prime Minister Harper was using to pander to his social conservative base. Thrust into his new role, Dion was facing something of a "rock and hard place" choice about whether or not he would whip his caucus into voting against the motion.

"The Prime Minister was being tricky," Dion recounts. "The vote was not on the bill, it was on 'Do you want to see the bill?' And I said if it was on the bill, then I would whip the vote, but since it is 'do you want to see a bill,' I will not whip it but I will count on you guys. It would have been more difficult if I had whipped the vote. The other point was, last time the Prime Minister—who was leader of the Opposition—justified this new vote in saying the Liberals have prevented their members from voting according to their conscience, so we don't know how many of them are in disagreement. So I took him at his word and said I will not whip—you will see. I wanted to prevent the rhetoric."

But for some, criticism is still levelled at the party for the way that the same-sex marriage issue was handled in the past, and for that, Dion has become something of a convert to the issue. Nearly ten years later, he can look back on what happened then in amazement, and see how the issue went from something rather abstract into a fact of life for Canadians today.

"This issue evolved very rapidly, and I was part of a government that voted against same-sex marriage when Anne McLellan was Minister of Justice," Dion admits. "The fact is I was minister and there was cabinet solidarity, but I did not advocate for it. And you know why—because none of my friends who are gay told me it was an issue. So I never thought that it was an issue—if they would have raised this issue to me forcefully, it would have been different. It's very strange how much it evolved so rapidly. But I never suspected that it was that important. It's done now, it's a good thing, and it's not an issue anymore."

Having been to so many events, Dion can't recall if he's ever been to a Pride event, unless it was in his hometown of Montréal, but he says that he is looking into attending some Pride activities this summer.

Dion's support for the gay and lesbian community is echoed in his vision for Canada—a country of tolerance, of fairness, of prosperity. A country that is a leader—and our Charter, and the fact that we have same-sex marriage, makes us a leader—and a country [the likes of which] the world needs more. ▼

Dale Smith is a freelance writer in Ottawa. He is also a regular contributor to Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and an occasional contributor to the Hill Times

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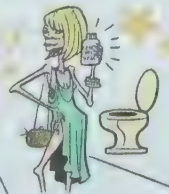
Presents...
Excerpts
from:

The New Gay Dictionary

Selected by: Glen Hanson & Allan Neuwirth

CelebriVom™ ("sel-EB-ra-vom")

(noun) fast acting
new diet pill; very
popular amongst
all the young, hip,
blonde, anorexic
and bulimic
Hollywood starlets.



Hatch ("hâch")

(verb) to hatch;
to get sentenced
for brazenly
cheating on your
income taxes.
Also see: fat,
hairy, naked
prison bitch.



Karl-rovian ("karl-RÔE-vec-an")

(adjective) the act of
being evil, porcine,
and manipulative.

ex. "Jed, that pig's
done gone all
karlrovian on us.
Better go git th' gun!"



Brokeback ("BRÔKE-bak")

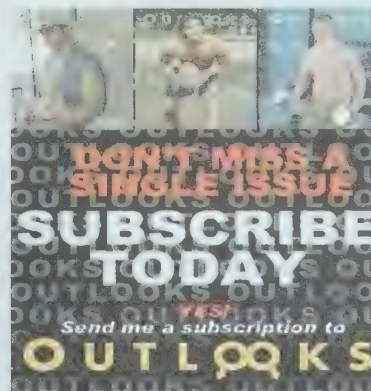
(verb) to brokeback; the
act of affection between
two men in public. Best
done while wearing
cowboy hats.

ex. "Aww, look, they're
brokebacking. Isn't
that cute?"



Madonna ("ma-DON-a")

(verb) to madonna;
technical term used
in the magazine
industry for digitally
retouching the hell
out of deeply wrinkled
faces of middle-aged
celebrities.



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DALLAS

Gaybourhood Pride



Surprisingly, deep in the heart of world-famous George Bush's ranch country, amidst ominous dark clouds there's a ray of sunlight and a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow—gay-friendly Dallas, Texas. This vibrant, lively city legitimately boasts the sixth largest gay population in the United States and once you spend a few days enjoying gay Dallas, this claim is easy to understand. After all, there must be good reasons why openly gay pop singer George Michael now makes Dallas his home.

So what makes Dallas so appealing to the gay traveller? Firstly, there's good 'ol southern charm mixed with warm hospitality and colourful culture. Secondly, the GLBT community is comfortably and solidly woven into the fabric of the city. Thirdly, the community groups and gay businesses work together creating a vibrancy to this city's hospitality, entertainment and retail organisations. Throughout the resident gay community a stranger is almost always recognised immediately and welcomed to the *gaybourhood*.

It seems as though there is always something happening in the Dallas GLBT community so whatever time of year one visits this city there are plenty of gay activities to entertain and fulfill your vacation needs. The diverse local resident community is integrated throughout Dallas and the gay scene is identifiable in several different areas. The heart of gay life can be found in the Oaklawn/Uptown district on Cedar Springs Road and the surrounding area nicknamed the *gaybourhood*. But there are also several smaller enclaves like the Bishop Arts District and local neighbourhoods such as Oakcliff. With approximately thirty gay and lesbian bars, pubs and clubs plus an equal number of gay or gay-friendly restaurants this city for sure knows how to entertain gay holidaymakers.

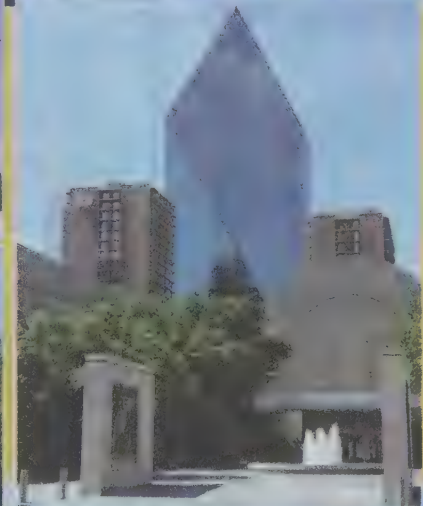
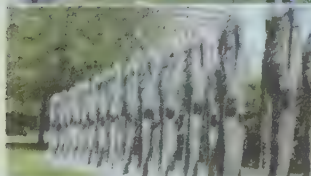
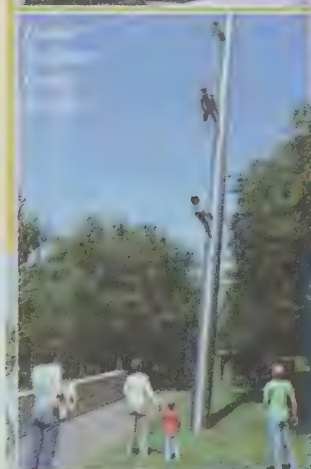
Local community groups include the Dallas Tavern Guild whose twenty-plus nightclub proprietor members strive to make your *night on the town* a positive, friendly experience. The North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce promotes and supports the economic development of the community. Dallas is home to the largest gay mens chorus in the country—The Turtle Creek Chorale—and the largest gay and lesbian church in the world—the Cathedral of Hope. Each spring the Texas Gay Rodeo Association organises the Big D Rodeo in Dallas and since 1984 throughout Texas they have raised an estimated two million dollars and donated this mostly to AIDS-related charities. The annual Pride celebrations take place in mid-September including the Texas Freedom Parade, Festival in Lee Park and the Voice Of Pride talent contest. Undoubtedly, these strong organisations are the very pulse and heartbeat of this vibrant GLBT population for which Dallas is becoming widely renowned.

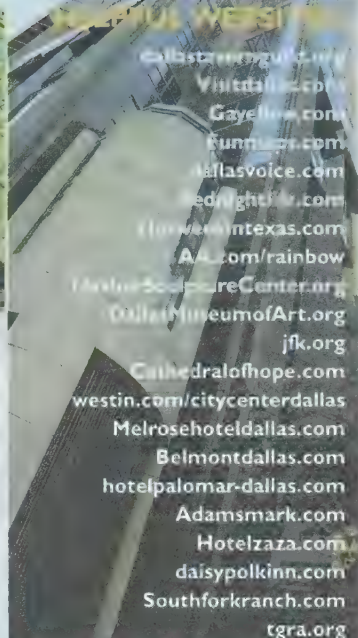
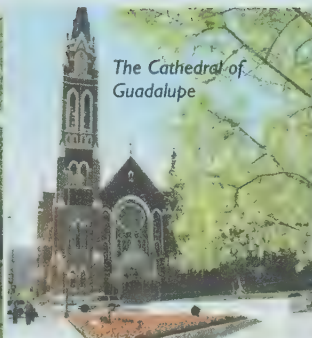
If you're interested in some arts and culture, then the Dallas Arts District is the place to call home. Comprised of a nineteen block, sixty-eight acre downtown locale it's the largest urban arts district in the country. The area residents include thirteen facilities and organisations dedicated to the arts. It is also the future site of the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts. Here you will find the Nasher Sculpture Center and Garden next door to the Dallas Museum of Art. A look and see here will reveal exhibitions similar to the recent Matisse: Painter as Sculptor—a combination of the artists paintings, drawings and sculptures—showcased between the two galleries.

Completed in October 2003, the 70 million dollar structure for the Nasher Sculpture Center and Garden houses the Nasher Collection of over 300 sculptures, plus touring exhibitions. A glass ceiling with glass facades, which allow the galleries to virtually extend into the garden, and for the artworks to be viewed in natural light, encloses the unique building. The indoor and outdoor exhibition space totals 72,000 square feet on a 1.4-acre site, which is probably the largest facility of its kind in the world. Strolling in the garden is akin to a tranquil sanctuary in the middle of the city where you are surrounded by unique, contemporary works of art. Art lover or novice, this is a must visit during your stay in this cosmopolitan city.

History buff, or not, the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza houses a not-to-be-missed important tribute to the life and times of the late President John F. Kennedy, his legacy and the era in American history often referred to as *Camelot*. Located on the sixth floor of the former Texas School Book Depository, this is a fascinating, educational audio-visual journey back in time to an important part of history from the '60s. Even if this particular historic time is unknown to you, it's an interesting, eye-opening lesson, which will be well worth an hour of your time to experience the Kennedy family impact on society yesterday, today and perhaps tomorrow. Be sure to rent the audio headsets, which provide an uncanny reality to this presidential era and the period following.

As you would expect in any large city the available accommodations in Dallas are many and varied in style, location and budgetary considerations.





Major hotel chains include the Westin City Center Hotel and the nearby Adam's Mark Hotel, each of which proved to be extremely gay positive. Both are located in the heart of downtown, a convenient distance to all the attractions and nightlife.

Newer boutique hotels are to be found all over Dallas, and they also offer a wide range of choice in every way. The Hotel Belmont overlooks downtown with a spectacular skyline view providing garden, loft or bungalow rooms and suites reinventing 1940s cool with a mix of modern luxury. In the Uptown Art District Hotel Zaza is a stylish property reminiscent of a Mediterranean villa outside and dramatically eclectic inside. The recently renovated—perhaps more accurately, rebuilt—Hotel Palomar is a structure infused with a spirit of renewal and is a true urban resort. In this luxury lifestyle boutique hotel you will discover that art is an integral part of the decor.

The restored historic Grande-Dame of Dallas hotels is the Warwick Melrose located right by the Cedar Springs gay village where entertainment can be found within a few short minutes walk from the hotel lobby.

For a home-away-from-home Bed & Breakfast experience, The Daisy Polk Inn is also located a block from Cedar Springs Road and offers fully restored antique furnishings with comfy bedrooms and common areas. Gay-owned and operated, you can be sure this will make for a perfect holiday home.

Whatever your choice for a place to stay, prepare for some southern hospitality with a gay flair and a genuinely warm welcome.

When it comes to nightlife, the Dallas gay scene is probably the envy of residents from most North America cities for this is a true smorgasbord of selection and choices to suit absolutely every gay desire for a night on the town. It would be impossible to describe everything in one short story but the Dallas Tavern Guild website provides extensive listings along with brief descriptions of what to expect from each restaurant or bar venue (see more details on pages 24-25).

However, worthy of mention—in random sequence—are some of the highlights of my nightlife tour: Kaliente Dance and Show Bar with a young and vibrant crowd of the community's hottest Latinos and Latinas keep this place smoldering with great salsa and Tejano music; Buddies II Women's Nightclub, a really popular spot, especially on weekends with good dance music, regular karaoke nights, pool tables and in the summer, a swimming pool and sand volleyball courts; Illusions, where a friendly, welcoming staff make this bar a regular hangout for locals who enjoy darts, karaoke and female impersonator shows; Alexandre's for live jazz and blues musicians on a nightly basis; Barbara's Pavilion near the popular and trendy Bishop Arts district in Oak Cliff is known for a friendly atmosphere, great neighborhood crowd and a tropical patio; Phases for karaoke in a neighbourhood pub atmosphere; Round-Up Saloon is the largest country-western dance club in the southwest, this nationally recognized night spot boasts five different bars, each with a distinct western style of it's own plus a friendly staff and hot cowboys and cowgirls make it a must-see for visitors.

Dining out in Dallas offers an international flair but also includes traditional barbecue steak and ribs prepared using famous Texas beef. Dining variety in downtown might include the trendy new Stephan Pyles Restaurant with his famous culinary style or traditional Texan fashion at Sonny Bryan's Bar-B-Que for ribs or steak. For a real culinary delight Uncle Julio's Restaurant will satisfy the most discerning gourmet palate. Breakfast choices might include the non heart-healthy feast at Lucky's Diner or a light start to the day at Buli Café. Whatever your favourite tastes might be you can be sure you will find it somewhere in this sophisticated city. As you can see, variety is the spice of life during a night on this town.

A good source of local information is the weekly newspaper the *Dallas Voice* published each Friday and available at practically every gay establishment. The 150-page *Dallas/Fort Worth Lambda Pages* is also a great reference guide to everything gay or gay-friendly in the community. To help find your way around this big city be sure to pick up the comprehensive Columbia FunMap, which is loaded with helpful tips and local maps. For a broader look at the state of Texas the *Red Nightlife* or *This Week In Texas* magazines cover statewide GLBT activities.

If you were a fan of the hit 80's television series Dallas, then a short thirty-five minute drive to tour the home of the Ewings—Southfork Mansion and Ranch Museum—might be the highlight of your trip. If this is the case, you probably won't want to tell your recently befriended locals the next time you see them. They will politely tell you that on Cedar Springs Road, JR's Bar and Grill for cowboys or Sue Ellen's Women's Club for cowgirls would have been more fun. Instead of a TV land fantasy, these clubs will make you feel like you know the real Dallas!

When making your travel plans it's important to note that the extremely gay-friendly carrier American Airlines is headquartered here. The Dallas/Fort Worth international airport is a major hub making it easy to think of them as your airline of choice. They provide a great deal of sponsorship support to the Dallas GLBT community and deserve a consideration in return. They even have a special rainbow website for you to visit.

The City of Dallas motto is *Live Large. Think Big*, and you have probably guessed by the end of this story that everything is larger in Texas, which leaves a really big impression on every gay visitor to the unfortunately named *Bush Country*. ▼

Roy Heale has been the owner of SuperMarketing for the past twenty-four years and is the founder and publisher of *Outlooks* magazine. He is also a member of the Travel Media Association of Canada.



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Sunday August 5, 11am-2:30pm, The West End

PRIDE FESTIVAL
Sunday August 5, 11am-6pm, Sunset Beach

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Saturday August 4, 9am-1pm, Davie Street at Water

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WEST SIDE PRIDE FESTIVAL
Saturday July 14, 11am-5pm, Grandview Park

WEST SIDE PRIDE DANCE
Saturday July 21, 8pm-1am, West Hall

WEST SIDE PRIDE FESTIVAL
Saturday July 21, 11am-5pm, Grandview Park

WEST SIDE PRIDE DANCE
Saturday August 4, 8pm-1am, West Hall

WEST SIDE PRIDE FESTIVAL
Saturday August 4, 11am-5pm, Grandview Park

WEST SIDE PRIDE DANCE
Saturday August 5, 8pm-1am, West Hall

WEST SIDE PRIDE FESTIVAL
Saturday August 5, 11am-5pm, Grandview Park

WEST SIDE PRIDE DANCE
Saturday August 6, 8pm-1am, West Hall

By Ray Heale
Photos by
All from Court Jester Media

WHERE TO STAY & WHERE TO PLAY IN DALLAS

ALEXANDER'S

— Neighbourhood Club
4026 Cedar Springs Road /
214.559.0720

An intimate club in the heart of Oaklawn with a friendly, neighborhood atmosphere and live entertainment. Always a very popular place on the weekends.



BARBARA'S PAVILLION — Neighbourhood Club

325 Centre Street / 214.941.2145

This spot near the popular and trendy Bishop Arts district in Oak Cliff is known for a very friendly atmosphere, a great neighbourhood crowd and a tropical patio, plus a pool table and jukebox.



BUDDIES II

— Women's Nightclub
4025 Maple Avenue /
214.526.0887



This is a really popular spot, especially on weekends, with good dance music, regular karaoke nights, pool tables, plus in the summer, a swimming pool and sand volleyball courts. There is a weekend cover charge.

DALLAS EAGLE — Levi Leather Bar

2515 Inwood Road # 107 / 214.357.4375

The Eagle is always the centre of most North Texas leather events and parties. Great weekends, a leather shop onsite, patio, plus hot leather daddies and leather boys. It is also home to the United Court of the Lonestar Empire.

ILLUSIONS — Neighbourhood Show Bar

4100 Maple Avenue / 214.252.0552

The friendly, welcoming staff make this bar a regular hangout for a fun crowd of locals who enjoy darts, karaoke and first class female impersonator shows.



JR'S BAR & GRILL — Video Bar

3923 Cedar Springs Road / 214.559.0650

JR's is located on the corner of Cedar Springs and Throckmorton (the gay crossroads) and this long-time landmark of the GLBT community booms year-round with an immensely popular balcony and two levels of bars. Also featuring pool tables, a huge video-wall and some entertainment. It's a real weekend happy hour hot-spot.

KALIENTE — Dance and Show Bar

4350 Maple Avenue at Hondo Avenue / 214.520.6676

A young and vibrant crowd of the community's hottest Latinos and Latinas keep this place smouldering with great salsa and Tejano music. It also features the best in latin female impersonation. Always packed on weekends, this is a popular place to be.

MICKEY'S — Music and Video Bar

3851 Cedar Springs Road / 214.219.MICK

The latest in video technology makes this a popular spot. With live streaming broadcasts of club events, best chest contests, karaoke, and entertainers, this place has action almost every night of the week. Look for a great show cast.

PHASES BAR — Karaoke, Neighbourhood Club

2615 Oaklawn Avenue / 214.528.2026

There's always something going on here and everyone is welcome. Take a few moments to check out the upcoming events, daily specials, and live entertainment schedule and then head on down to join the party.

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ROUND-UP SALOON
DALLAS, TEXAS



ROUND-UP SALOON – Country Western Bar

3912 Cedar Springs Road / 214.522.9611

The largest country-western dance club in the southwest, this nationally recognized night spot boasts five different bars, each with a distinct western style of its own. Designed around a huge, hand-laid hardwood dance floor and an enormous overhead Texas-shaped neon light, there is no mistake as to what draws the crowds here. A friendly staff and hot cowboys and cowgirls make it a must-see for visitors. Great karaoke five nights a week and it is the home for many Sunday charitable, fundraising shows.

STATION 4 – Mega Dance Club

3911 Cedar Springs Road / 214.559.0650

This recently remodelled mega-club is one of the finest dance-clubs in the Southwest. Without a doubt it is very simply huge! High energy music, massive light shows and an enormous stainless steel dance floor are the highlights downstairs. The upper level boasts a quiet bar and balconies overlooking the dance floor, plus a Vegas-style show room with performances five nights a week. There is a superb cast featuring some of America's finest female impersonators. Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, there is a cover charge for admission.

SUE ELLEN'S – Women's Club

3903 Cedar Springs Road / 214.559.0650

Another legendary club named for yet another character from the infamous TV show, *Dallas*. It boasts two patios, one in the rear and one streetside, live bands perform several nights a week, regular karaoke, pool tables and dance floor. This is where the hot looking women meet, and there is a weekend cover charge.

THROCKMORTON MINING COMPANY – Men's Levi Cruise Club

3014 Throckmorton Avenue / 214.559.0650

Just around the corner from JR's, this spot features entertainment, hot music with everything from top 40's to hip-hop to retro. There are occasional shows and very popular weekend beer busts. It also has pool tables and a second-level balcony that overlooks the dance floor.

THE TIN ROOM – Neighbourhood Bar

2514 Hudnall Street / 214.526.6365

A fun, friendly club just minutes from the Oaklawn area with welcoming, cordial staff and a solid regular local clientele.

DALLAS WOODY'S

– Sports & Video Bar

4011 Cedar Springs Road / 214.520.6629

A unique mix of entertainment, video and sports make this bar quite popular with many of the GLBT sports teams in the community. You can expect karaoke, live entertainment, Broadway show tunes, plus a wide array of live TV sports events on multiple screens. There is a palmtree framed patio street side, which makes for great afternoon and evening cocktail hours. On the second floor there are pool tables, and a second patio with a view of the entire strip.



Finding the perfect accommodations in Dallas can be fun as there are so many interesting places to choose from. The following are some details on just a few of the possibilities:

HOTEL BELMONT

901 Fort Worth Avenue / 214.393.2300

Overlooking downtown Dallas, the Belmont reinvents 1940s cool with a mix of modern luxury, local flavour and mid-century swank. It is conveniently located for the central business district, the Arts District, the Market Center and the Bishop Arts District, plus the local nightlife. There is a combination of rooms, suites and lofts to choose from each offering all modern facilities.



HOTEL ZAZA

2332 Leonard Street / 214 468 8399

This stylish hotel is reminiscent of a Mediterranean villa outside but dramatically eclectic inside with 146 rooms to choose from. Known as The Magnificent Seven, there are seven private ultra-luxury suites in addition to luxury rooms. Each room offers plenty of space, separate sitting areas and high-speed



internet access. The hotel's Dragonfly restaurant is decorated in rich red and gold fabrics and the menu features global cuisine. You can enjoy a poolside cocktail at the Urban Oasis bar or chill in the wonderful health spa. This urban boutique hotel has become known as the Queen of Style.

HOTEL PALOMAR

5300 East Mockingbird Lane / 214 520 7969

This luxury lifestyle boutique hotel is the city's first and only urban resort. The recent renovations have created a unique artistic transformation of the original building. The rooftop swimming pool, luxurious rooms, Exhale Spa, plus the bars and restaurant make for a complete vacation right in the hotel. There are also complete banquet facilities and meeting rooms for special events or business meetings. It is located conveniently for all the other attractions which Dallas has to offer. ▼



Marcin & Dawid

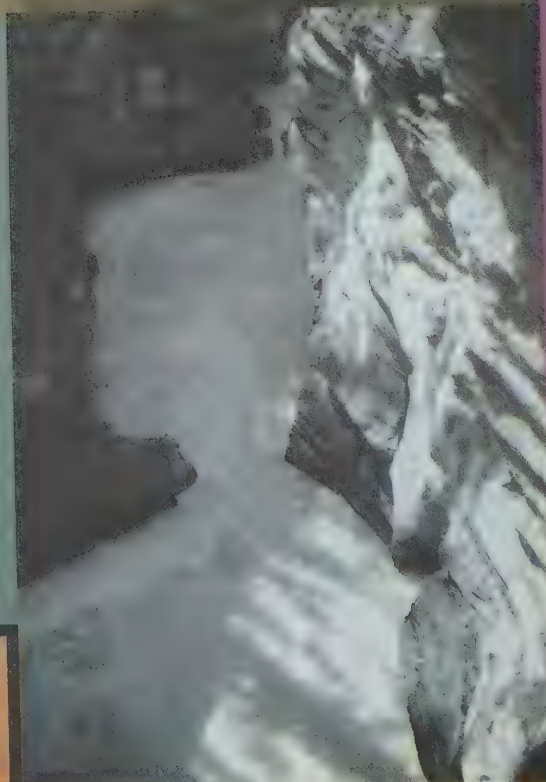
Marcin and Dawid Witukiewicz are identical twin brothers born only five minutes apart. Though it may be hard to believe, their interests—artistic, aesthetic—and ambitions are as intertwined as their common birthdate.

Their work focuses primarily on expressing the sculptural beauty of the male form—working with light and shadows, bringing out the athleticism and sensuality of the male body.

Web site: <http://members.shaw.ca/marcawidarts/>

Email: marcawidarts@shaw.ca

Witukiewicz



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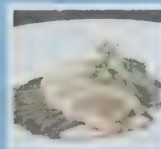
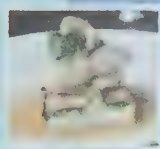
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HUNTING FOR A HUNK!

By **Natasha Green**

This summer once again, your host Mathieu Chantelois embarks on a relentless search for Canada's most gorgeous guy. The goal this time around? To find the next Ginch Gonch underwear model.

What do you get when you cross dozens of gorgeous guys with a modeling contract, magazine cover, charming host, flamboyant stylist, and lots of quality male booty in all shapes and sizes? You get COVERguy, of course! Season 3 of this fun and sassy male model-search television series, which shoots this summer and airs on OUTtv Sunday evenings starting October 1. It's sure to turn heads of all persuasions.

While the competition is held in downtown Toronto, COVERguy's selection process scours our fair country to feature candidates from coast to coast. Gay and straight, buff or slim, they're all vying to become Canada's next top male model.

"We want the contest to be accessible to everyone. Last year, the show was taking place in a lounge call lub. We had to tell some of the straight boys the bar was called lub (rhymes with tub) and not the provocative lube, the correct pronunciation," says host Mathieu Chantelois. As such, this year

COVERguy's producers opted to move beyond the gay Church St. neighbourhood into the trendy Gladstone Hotel, located in the hip fashion and arts district of Queen St. West.

Meanwhile, the success of Seasons one and two is already evidence of the series' widespread appeal. COVERguy is a hit not only throughout Canada, where it titillates a million subscribers on OutTV, but also in countries like Israel, the U.S., and Australia where the series has been syndicated. And, as everyone plugged into pop culture already knows, Season two of COVERguy is a major YouTube phenomenon! (As such, a web strategy is being developed to effectively bring the show to a younger worldwide audience.)

So, boys, if you're strutting your stuff in the T-Dot, look out! COVERguy's Chantelois and stylist Maha will grab the bull by the horns, so to speak, and troll the streets in search of potential contestants—nice work if you can get it. Yes, COVERguy's mischievous, uninhibited and always scandalous Maha also returns this season. Maha has the honour of dressing and making over the competition's semi-finalists.

"They come to me in their underwear, and I get to dress and mold them," says Maha with glee. "I tell people I handle straight men for a living. Sometimes the stylist is the model's first gay experience!" Maha also finds himself acting as pal to some of his charges. "Mathieu puts the heat on them, the judges knock them down and then I'm the person who uses the constructive criticism to get them to the next level."

Chantelois says, "The show basically follows us around as we look at guys. Most of my job is too keep Maha's hands off the models and make sure he doesn't drink too much."

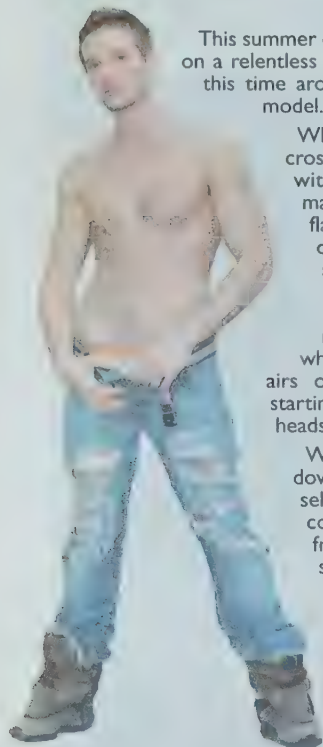
The basic structure of the show remains unchanged: COVERguy's illustrious panel of celebrity judges will select the cream of the crop from an open call, as well as guys who have been scouted. Finally, forty yummy contestants will compete in the semi-finals, held at the Gladstone before a live audience every Wednesday night (starting July 11 and running till August 1). Each week's winner will move on to the finals, held August 16 (which happens to be Madonna's birthday) in the Gladstone's beautiful ballroom.

Yet perhaps the biggest addition to COVERguy's updated resumé is the coveted Ginch Gonch modeling contract awarded to this year's winner. "The gay boys and straight boys all want to be a Ginch Gonch model, in the same way everyone wanted to be a Calvin Klein underwear model during the 1990s," says Chantelois. Celebrating sexual awareness, the Vancouver-based line has earned a reputation for being the brat of our nation's apparel industry, creating funky, bold underwear for men with taglines like "Tame Your Flame" and "Pop a Wheelie."

As if that wasn't enough, in addition to the Ginch Gonch contract COVERguy's prizes also include a one-year membership to Goodlife Fitness Club and to grace the cover of a future edition of *Outlooks* magazine (Not to mention, of course, eternal fame and glory...). Of course, Chantelois points out, Season one and two winners are now working models signed to professional agencies.

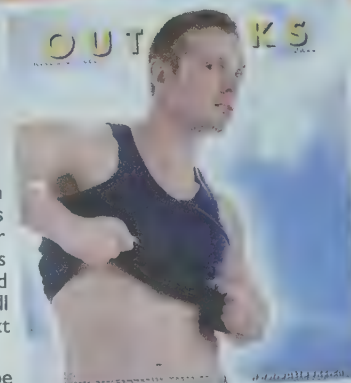
Aspiring male models, start your engines! The Gladstone Hotel will host an open call the weekend of June 16 and 17 from 12-5PM. For more information go to coverguy.tv or call (416)964-7377. ▼

Natasha Green is a Toronto-based writer and shiatsu therapist who also plays bass in the pop band The Pumps



2006 Winner: Gerry
Photo by: Brian Lawrence

coverguy



November 2006 cover
Photo by: Dale Bolivar

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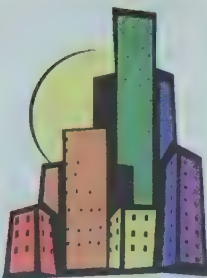
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OUT ON THE town



By Jesse Trautmann

When I was a kid there was a bookshelf in the stairwell of my co-op's office where I found a book that probably shouldn't have been there. It was an erotic-humour book with a lot of naughty cartoons called *If It Moves, F**k It*. I shared this book with the other boys in the co-op and no matter how many times we looked at it, it never got boring. I always think about this book come Pride time because a few years ago my friends were pondering what the theme was going to be and I offered *If It Moves, F**k It* and we all had a good laugh. But I wasn't kidding. Pride has the power to seduce even the biggest prudes and the most committed couples to flirt with temptation. What happens at Pride stays at Pride.

For gay single men, Toronto's Pride will never get boring because of the influx of men that flood the city from all over the globe. Church Street becomes a buffet of new dishes and the competition can get pretty fierce, which is why I hatched a plan to keep in front of the race, literally. I got a job at the Pride's Welcome Centre where everyone came to pick up their tickets and passes for the major parties. I got first dibs on all the hotties—the perfect opportunity to flirt and be flirted with. Some of the pick-up lines were cute, some were funny but one in particular really got me. A tall, fit, handsome guy in his early 30's (I'll call him McWowza) came in and while he waited for his VIP weekend pass he told me I looked like a young Richard Gere. He invited me to go out for a drink with him later that night, naturally, I obliged.

When I arrived at the bar I found McWowza surrounded by three other guys that I assumed were friends, but after some chatting I found out they were just random guys he met that evening. Also, he had picked us all up with actor look-alike lines. To my right sat a "scruffier" Ryan Phillippe, on my left was a "slimmer" Tom Welling and across the table sat a "punkier" Orlando Bloom. Apparently, I wasn't the only actor auditioning for McWowza's "part". Usually I can't be bothered to compete for a guy but because it was Pride I decided to stick this one out.

The first to go was Tom Welling who got a call from a friend letting him know that his car was about to be towed. I managed to monopolize the conversation long enough for Orlando to get bored and finally meet someone else, but scruffy Phillippe was becoming hard to shake. It was getting late and I had to work in the morning, so I made an offensive. I pretended to accidentally tip my drink over, which poured right into Phillippe's lap. Just when I thought I had won, McWowza offered Phillippe a ride home to get changed. Not only did I lose, but my plan gave him a reason to get his pants off faster.

On my way home I chuckled to myself about how uncharacteristic my behaviour had been that night but was able to shrug it off knowing that the next day I would have ample opportunity to meet another guy and, of course, I did. ▼

Jesse Trautmann is a twenty-six year-old freelance writer in Toronto and a Journalism student at Ryerson. He welcomes feedback from readers. Contact him at jesseetra@hotmail.com

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Happy PRIDE

FROM THE 500 SHOPS AND SERVICES OF UPTOWN 17

ARTHUR WOOLLEN

him—he's bright, successful, fit, and fun and yet his tactics in seeking love seem composed more of enthusiasm than skill. His best friend, Quinn (a soap opera writer) and his mother are constant companions in Curtis' voyage, more than happy to lend their advice, criticism and commentary at every stage.

I spoke with Arthur Wooten and asked him about the origins of the story.

Outlooks: First of all, the boring, but necessary question: How much of Arthur is there in Curtis?

Wooten: Let's put it this way, I call *On Picking Fruit* "autobiofictional". But Curtis and I are very different. He's never been in a relationship and I've been in three long-term relationships. And Curtis is much more of a prude than me and a bit neurotic. But I hope I'm as funny as he is. I'd venture to say that I'm more like Mrs. J. or even Dr. Magda Tunick.

Outlooks: Ah, yes...Dr. Magda and her famous technique.

Wooten: The Tunick Technique is basically creatively visualizing what you want. But not just wishing for it. Seeing it. Feeling it. Owning it. Nothing exists before it's a thought first. It's the same for writing a book—or meeting another person.

Outlooks: And where are you, Arthur, in the quest?

Wooten: My most recent relationship, which lasted ten years, ended a few years back. We're still best if not better friends now but ...I'M SINGLE! Actually, I've been focusing on the book, its promotion and its sequel, *Fruit Cocktail*, which comes out November 2007 and not dating much. Know any single, sexy, smart supermen with a sense of humour?

Outlooks: Besides me, you mean?

Wooten: (laughs)

Outlooks: I would like to say hooray for having a middle-aged main character. Was that a conscious choice?

Wooten: Oh, it was a very conscious choice. It's a voice we never hear in gay fiction. I didn't want to write about young angst or sexual confusion. This is a man who is totally comfortable with being gay—he just hasn't figured out how to open up his heart and mind to let his other half in. But, it may also be, and this is okay too, that Curtis really doesn't want to be in a relationship. If that's true, he just hasn't figured that out yet.

Outlooks: The character of Quinn is really the perfect balance for Curtis. While Quinn is in some ways the more superficial—back waxing, eyelash dying, doing the Hollywood scene, et cetera—he is also a very pragmatic, realistic type too.

Wooten: Ralph, you're so smart! As shallow and flustered and self-absorbed as he is, he's Curtis' voice of reason. Quinn's brain works on a very base level—hence, he really doesn't complicate his thinking process.

Outlooks: Curtis, by contrast, is sometimes so idealistic and rigid.

Wooten: Yes. Curtis has very high expectations, but at the same time he'll drown himself in questions and doubt, resulting sometimes in inertia. Or a great man might bump into him and he overthinks or judges him so quickly that they guy will pass Curtis by.

Outlooks: Curtis is HIV positive, which adds an extra urgency, perhaps to his search?

Fruit Pickers?

By Ralph Higgins

When Ethel Merman first trumpeted "You Can't Get A Man With A Gun", she was adding to an already long list of failed techniques tried by those seeking Mr. Right. Most of us can contribute from our own experience other sure-fire methods of not getting the man—and many of them will be found in the pages of *On Picking Fruit*, the hilarious novel by Arthur Wooten.

Curtis, the somewhat hapless hero of the story is eager—not to say desperate—to find a man, someone loving, kind and sexy to be part of his life. With the aid of a shrink—the enigmatic yet maternal, Dr. Tunick—he embarks on a campaign to find his mate.

Curtis has a lot going for

Wooten: I don't see the HIV storyline as an urgency for Curtis—he'll be around for a long time—but I did want to write a book about a person with the virus and show that he is living a vital, creative life and contributing to society. He's not the type of person who would cash in on disability when he's absolutely healthy. I also wanted to show, not preach, that there are still a lot of uneducated people out there in regard to HIV and that Curtis unfortunately meets a few.

Outlooks: Mrs. J. Curtis' mother is like a cheerleader for PFLAG—brassy, over the top, protective... sort of June Cleaver as a fag hag... yet, in a way, she holds Curtis back.

Wooten: Funny! Mrs. J. is a complicated character. She loves her son fiercely and would kill for him. In fact, she almost does twice in the book! But she's a party girl and wants to hang out with Curtis. And let's face it, she's self-centred and has very little tact. What she thinks, she says—especially to her son. I'd venture to say that she'd like Curtis to stay single. A partner might cramp her style or at the very least, make her jealous.

Outlooks: Tell me something about Arthur Wooten—how does a nice man like you end up in a novel like this?

Wooten: Having smart cocktails with friends, both gay and straight, we were laughing one night with tears streaming down our cheeks over each other's dating horror stories. Every name in *On Picking Fruit* has been changed to convict the guilty. But there is one date in the book that actually happened to me almost word for word. Maybe if one of your readers can guess it correctly, we can have a date?

Outlooks: And now the story is coming to television, right?

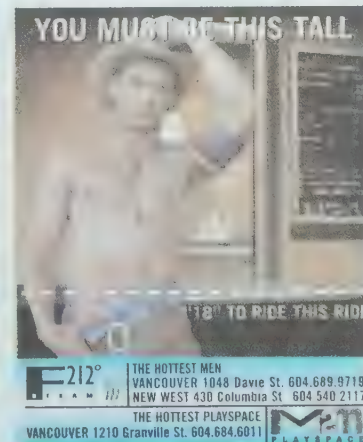
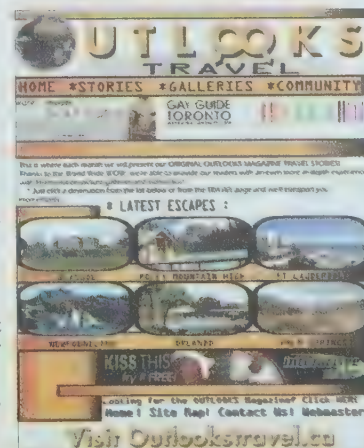
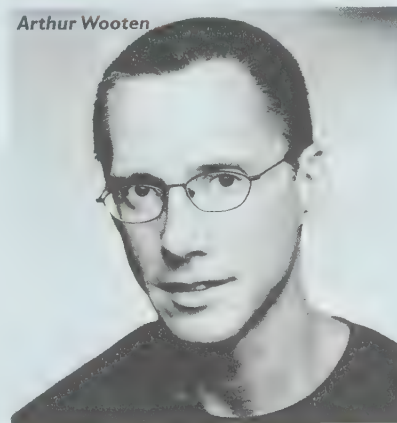
Wooten: It's so exciting and yet, because it's in pre-production, I truly don't want to jinx anything. I can tell you that I'm staying on as creator/producer/writer. Yay! It's a long process but we are at the stage now where we are deciding where it will air.

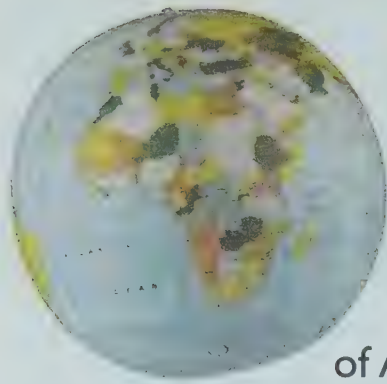
Outlooks: I look forward to the sequel of the book, and the TV series. Thanks for talking with us.

Wooten: A great pleasure.

There is a sort of genius in Wooten's ability to take common experience (you'll swear the author lifted passages directly out of your secret diary) and making Curtis' struggles uproariously funny and yet not ridiculous. There is a lot of forgiveness and self-acceptance in this book. It shows that part of *la condition humaine* is to strive and fail, and there is comfort in that. Actions taken for all the right reasons sometimes achieve an undesirable end and there are many wonderful people starving for love and still going to bed hungry. In short, Curtis' tale is a story most of us have lived. ▼

For more information visit: onpickingfruit.com





The Mother Ship of All Things Pride

By David King

We may not all be aware of it, but Canadian Pride is a mere 'Region 7' on the global scale.

It's one of twenty international numbers that marks our existence with InterPride, or the International Association of Pride Organizers. Following Regions 1 to 6 in the U.S. where Interpride was founded, our 'Lucky 7' is playing a pretty crucial role at the international table these days, and with the recent incorporation of Fierté Canada Pride (or FCP), it's about to become an even bigger player.

"Canadian Pride events are in some ways unique," observes Interpride Region 7 Director Ross Chapman. "Unlike the U.S., we have much more access to funding from federal, provincial and local governments for our activities, and that can be a model for other countries."

Chapman, who represents Canada around the world, is no Pride newbie. As treasurer of both Pride Toronto and now FCP, he wears three hats on local, national and international circuits, the latter of which is increasingly battling the atrocities taking place in start-up Pride events around the globe. Surely, Interpride is no United Nations, but it's certainly developing a similar role in the context of awareness on human rights abuse.

One example is Moscow Pride's recent decision to fight its Supreme Court over blocking its start-up Pride event. At the table with Interpride, Moscow Pride has been able to arm itself with knowledge and assess how other Pride events have fought their battles. Now awaiting their court dates, their co-founders will be highly visible this year as Grand Marshals for Vancouver Pride.

"Interpride bonds some interesting relationships," says Chapman, and along with awareness, I think that's its most important role. It really allows us to take a look at what is going on around the world, and the light of day still needs to be shed upon so many other countries."

Funded by a few sponsors and its own memberships, Interpride can be instrumental at addressing human rights needs, although it's been very careful to not step on toes of other organizations already devoted to them. Founded to facilitate networking, its 150 internationally pink reps meet at least once per year for a global schmooze, addressing what Chapman describes as an increasingly diverse set of challenges and issues facing Pride organizers. Its governing board (whose executives currently hail from countries like the U.S., Iceland and Brazil) has only elected one or two Canadian execs in the past, but not unlike our peeps at the U.N., they've done us proud.

Last year's annual Interpride meeting, held in Portland Maine, was attended by reps from most of Canada's major cities, and as Chapman notes, while reps from smaller Canadian Pride events do surface, subsidies are often needed to make their trips available. As a result, Interpride's member organizers often pitch in themselves for an ongoing scholarship fund, helping organizers who don't even have 'travel' in their vocabulary. This year's meeting, to be held in Zurich, will hopefully grow in 'beaver'.

So, aside from simply showing up, what are Canada's needs on the Interpride agenda these days? As Chapman describes, all eyes are definitely fixed on small town start-up events. With world-calibre, often commercialized programming already enshrined in our metropolitan areas, it's easy to forget that approximately seventy Canuck municipalities and regions have begun or are attempting Pride activities themselves. It's something Chapman has devoted himself to nurturing, encouraging everyone (and particularly media) to start making the invisible visible. The formation of FCP, aimed at adding regional networking to international representation, may help to do just that. Until then, cities like Brandon, Manitoba

(debuting Pride this year) may not survive their growing pains—the same ones that have simultaneously cancelled events in Ontario's Simcoe County.

"Aside from allowing us to negotiate insurance and discount benefits on a more national level rather than through Interpride's international bureaucracy," says Chapman, "FCP should give us more opportunities to go to the provinces with numerous prides and help all of them advance. An unincorporated collective wouldn't have that ability."

Currently handling media and public relations for this year's Halifax Pride, FCP's newly elected President, Raymond Taavel, is truly 'on board' with Chapman in establishing immediate outreach across the country.

"FCP's two goals right now are outreach and stronger internal communication. That communication is not something we've been successful with in the past, but we're now turning a new page and trying to get our sea legs, so to speak."

As Taavel reports, each of Fierté Canada Pride's regional directors is already tracking down Prides in their respective locales to make first contact by the end of summer. Now, amidst seven pride events in the Atlantic region alone, Taavel will be personally visiting them this summer along with Winnipeg and Vancouver Prides. And while FCP doesn't have the budget yet to support those visits, technology has come in handy for conferencing as regional reps compile the information they need. Taavel, who's worn almost every hat at Halifax Pride for six years, can already forecast the resources that Pride groups require—large and small.

"I think as a country we've attained our rightful place, but the challenge now is not to be complacent, especially when we have so many resources to offer. The work is not done."

In non-metro cities and towns, lack of resources for hosting Prides is most often the direct result of lack of dollars. Surely, that's a common denominator for all Prides around the world. The difference in Canada's smaller communities, Taavel notes, lies in the mindset and culture of those smaller communities, where municipal support is not just about pink bucks. The Mayoral recognition and participation in Prides, seen in most of Canada's larger metros, is a good example of a flip-side to smaller regions, including medium-sized cities like London, Ontario and Fredericton, New Brunswick, where kaffuffles over simply recognizing Pride has been like pulling teeth. As Taavel reports, attendance stats on locales like Sydney, Nova Scotia aren't even visible, while only a few hours away in Halifax, Pride itself was recently shocked to discover Haligonians rallying for the Mayor to take a stroll in the parade.

"When other people start rattling those chains, it does show a shift in the air," says Taavel, "along with a larger centre that simply has different needs. That said, a recent news poll indicates that forty-nine per cent say 'No' to Mayoral participation in Halifax, which means there's actually a heck of a lot of work to do. If it's like that in a city like Halifax, you can imagine the challenges in a place like Prince George."

Taavel adds that FCP could be most useful in providing basic resources for small-town events—everything from infrastructure support to marketing strategies. It's something Interpride already does internationally, providing first-time organizers with info and resources on its website.

"I really want to see FCP play a stronger role in networking," says a determined Taavel, "with exchanges of ideas and the chance to build a support system for new events, like Pictou County. Here in Halifax, for example, the question invariably came up of why Prides don't have charitable status to better deliver on tax receipts. There's a reason for that, but this type of organization allows us to explore those kinds of ideas, and behave as a resource centre."

If all goes well with Canuck networking in 2007, we should see some great results for both FCP and Region 7 at InterPride during 2008. Hosting its FCP conference in Charlottetown in April 2008, both Taavel and Chapman will be instrumental figures for Interpride's international annual meeting, which heads to Vancouver in October. Since there are only a few major differences between InterPride's Region 7 and Fierté Canada Pride (insurance planning for starters), FCP's new status will likely mean Region 7 of Interpride's Canadian meetings will overlap those of FCP, at least until FCP lands on its own two feet.

FCP's new website should also pop up shortly—just in time for the rosy (and thorny) season that is Pride in Canada. Meanwhile, for those of us big-city folks who question the very nature of Pride beyond party favours, it's high time to consider what got us here, particularly on an increasingly connected planet where being proud can also be a death sentence. With cities like Toronto, San Francisco and New York in favourable positions to consult on Pride (Sao Paulo, the world's biggest, allegedly does miracles on a small budget), there's no time like the present to give back. ▼

For more info on InterPride and Fierté Canada Pride, visit interpride.org and fiertecanadapride.com.

David King is a freelance journalist currently residing in Montreal. A writer, performer and director, he is the co-founding Artistic Director of Montreal's OUT Productions.

Dining Out for Life

April 26



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Winnipeg Pride: Living, Loving And Being

By Peter Carlyle-Gordge

Winnipeg's twenty-first annual Pride festival will kick off with the raising of the rainbow flag at City Hall on Thursday May 31 and culminate Sunday June 10 with the downtown Pride parade, outdoor festival, an interfaith service and Pride Fusion—described as a red hot and retro dance extravaganza—at the Marlborough Hotel.

Marketing coordinator Robert Cote says the major change this year will be a change of location and date for the final big dance bash. In previous years it has been held on a Saturday night at the Convention Centre. That often conflicted with other Saturday night events, so the decision was made to switch the event to Sunday evening.

"The big dance used to be on Sundays but people complained that it was the day before work, so we switched it to Saturday," he says. "People complained about that too, so now we have gone back to the Sunday event."

The theme this year is 'Live, Love, Be'. It comes from suggestions by the international association of pride organizers. "We always include their theme as one of our selection options and this year we decided it was one we wanted," says Cote.

He says the final Sunday night dance party is the main change this year. There has been declining attendance at the Convention Centre event in recent years. The contract expired and costs went up, so a new venue was chosen. Cote says the dance event is the only one that actually makes money—money vitally needed as seed funding for the following year—so he's anxious that it be a sellout. One thousand tickets have been printed.

The dance event—Fusion: Red Hot And Retro—will be held in two rooms at the Marlborough Hotel, both on the top floor. The Skyview Ballroom and the Marlborough Ballroom hold 1,000 between them. One will be the location for the noisier dancing, while the other room, holding 200, will offer a slightly more sedate pace for those who prefer a somewhat quieter venue.

"The old cabaret event was for people who weren't into the techno music so one of the Marlborough rooms will cater to them with a retro mood, while the larger one will have more of a disco atmosphere," says Cote.

A block of hotel rooms has also been reserved for people who may want to crash after the dance party and avoid calling cabs or trying to drive home.

Cote says it's hoped ticket buyers will sample the offerings in both locations. In previous years Pride held a separate cabaret evening as an alternative to the noisier main dance party, so this dual event in one location should satisfy everyone.

"We hope to fuse the best elements of Pride dances from the past two decades to make for an unforgettable party," says Cote.

Each room will have a different vibe and four of the city's favourite DJ's will help keep the party spinning along. Cote is confident all the tickets can be sold.

Another change this year will be the Pride guide. It will be smaller and more easily able to fit into a pocket.

On June 1 there will be a What Womyn Want boat cruise and the Jewish community will organize an Anakhnu Pride Brunch on June 3. It offers vegetarian food and Yiddish music.

June 6 will see a Reel Pride film screening and the following day there will be a roller skating event as well as a Meet and Greet reception put on by Prime Timers.

June 3-4 will also witness a Pitch For Pride Baseball Tournament with fifteen teams of a dozen players each. Trophies will be awarded to winners and the whole event promises to be low-key with absolutely no cutthroat competition. There is no dress code and no gender rules.

The event includes kite flying for kids and even a trophy for the team, which spreads "the most queer cheer" over the weekend. It is also advertised as pet-friendly, provided no dogs start making off with the baseball.

A Pride Coffee House (no booze or tobacco) with poetry, readings, comedians and music will be held June 8. It includes free coffee, tea and dainties. The following day will see the annual Cocktails In The Trees loft party, a dressed-up event in an



elegant private home in the heavily treed Wolseley area. The Rainbow Resource Centre organizes the event.

Gaudy and glitzy drag queens and splendiferous floats are a major attraction of the Sunday parade from the grounds of the Legislature. That's followed by an outdoor festival and business fair, which offers a chance for GLBT and gay-friendly businesses to showcase their services and wares. Local service organizations such as the Rainbow Resource Centre are also featured.

Winnipeg Pride celebrations began in Winnipeg on August 2, 1987, when 250 people took part in a one-day event. Some marched with brown paper bags covering their heads—they were afraid to be recognized by employers and others.

Today, some 3,000 show up for the event, including many straight, gay-positive families with children in tow. No heads are hidden by brown paper bags. The crowd is out, proud and not at all shy or reticent. The Pride event is also the largest on the prairies.

A survey done a couple of years ago found that:

- 50% of attendees are 25 - 44 years of age
- 20% of attendees identified as straight
- 90% rated Winnipeg Pride as a positive overall experience
- 74% have attended Winnipeg Pride in the past
- 96% said they would return next year

You can find out more details at: gaypridewinnipeg.com

Come out and join us for an evening of lavish cocktails, tasty treats and live music atop the beautiful rooftop gardens of the Winnipeg Art Gallery Penthouse Sunday, June 10 at 300 Memorial Boulevard \$40 Advance ticket sales only (partial tax receipt provided) Tickets available at the Rainbow Resource Centre - please call (204)474-0212 or by calling Kevin at (204)774-2772. Door prizes include limited edition Historic GLBTT posters.

Start your pre-social evening or stay until midnight and enjoy an evening under the stars. This is the premier Rainbow Resource Centre Fundraising Event ▼

Peter Carlyle-Gordge is a former Manitoba correspondent for Maclean's and The Financial Post. He has written for most major magazines and newspapers in Canada as well as broadcasting on the national and international networks of CBC Radio. As honorary press secretary to the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba in the 1980s, Peter was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal for services to Canada in 2003.

Photo supplied by Daryl Malone Productions



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SOUTHERN ONTARIO

PRIDE NIAGARA PENINSULA

By Ben Benedict

It's time to celebrate Pride across the globe, including southwestern Ontario, where Pride activities are not only increasing in visibility but in locations as well with Windsor, Sarnia, Chatham-Kent, London, Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Halton Region and Hamilton all having some form of event—from picnics to dances with local and international entertainers, this renowned Bible Belt circuit is turning hotter than a Broadway musical.

Some of the larger organizations are well into their planning. They're incorporated and have strong community support from local politicians and community organizers. Places like London, Hamilton and Windsor have established communities, even if they're always changing and rarely stable. Then there are communities like Chatham-Kent.

"Chatham has become the capitol of Fundamentalist Christian radio in Canada," says Mike Ondrovic, president of Chatham-Kent Pride, now in its sixth year as an incorporated organization adding, "I get a lot of volunteers who want to help but are terrified of being outed."

It's because of this that we continue to celebrate Pride in these more rural-focused communities. It's not for the professional whose out and successful but for the closeted and young, for the senior contemplating a retirement home and those of our peers affected by HIV.

London has set its dates for July 19 until 31, and is celebrating twenty-five years of Pride. London Pride is a celebratory, cultural festival that through activities promotes unity, inclusion, and awareness of sexual and gender diversity. The organization, Pride London Festival is now in its third year as an incorporated non-profit, providing greater stability and visibility for London's gay community members. The parade will take place on Sunday, July 29 with the details to be announced.

Hamilton's Pride Festival celebrates eleven years of community from June 9 to 17, including the rally and march on June 16. Hamilton Pride Festival, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation whose function is to plan, organize and produce Hamilton Pride celebrating the diversity, history, and achievements of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Communities annually during the month of June. The big day here is Saturday, June 16, beginning with a rally at 11 AM followed by the parade at 11:30 AM at Hamilton City Hall followed by a day of activities at Pier 4 Park with free admission.

Others, like Windsor, are growing and others, like Halton Region, are changing.

Windsor Pride celebrations run from July 23 until 29 and include a flag raising at City Hall, family and cultural events and a parade. Beginning as a small celebration back in 1992, it was incorporated as an Ontario corporation without share capital on May 9, 2006 as the Windsor Pride Community. This strong and vibrant not-for-profit organization of committed and driven volunteers work for and embrace the entire GLBT community, no matter gender, race, culture, creed, age, ability, orientation, economic status or affiliation. The event attracted nearly 5,000 visitors in 2006.

Halton Organization for Pride and Education (HOPE) is a registered charitable community organization supporting the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer communities of the Halton Region in Ontario. HOPE Board of Directors, Halton PFLAG and some awesome community volunteers have been successful in putting together the event for the past seven years and are looking to build this social event to be bigger and better. Traditionally held on the first Saturday in June, which is unattainable according to their website, they have therefore decided to plan a Fall Pride on September 8, with a goal to create a planning committee and promote the event through the summer at other Pride events.

This is also a good time to consider volunteering for your local pride organization. Smaller organizations like Sarnia, Chatham-Kent, and Cambridge-Kitchener-Waterloo, are still in the process of gathering dedicated committee members capable of hosting events of local interest.

The Guelph Pride Organizing Committee hosted their Pride events beginning on Friday, May 25, with the raising of the rainbow flag at City Hall by Mayor Karen Farbridge. What began as a single event has now expanded to what is being called Pride Weekend in Guelph.

While Pride continues to blanket itself in serious community based issues, there's also the lighter side of simply coming together to have a gay old time. There will, of course, be boys in skirts and girls in pants, probably more beer than martinis, and if Bette Middler shows up you know she'll be sporting a five o'clock shadow.



While traditionally living in the shadow of our big sister Toronto, many proud men and women have escaped that Mecca of gaydom for the peace of quieter villages throughout southwestern Ontario. Throw in gay marriage and gay is more than OK—it's everywhere. Over the last five years, this has also translated into increased support between organizations and neighbouring communities with the creation of a rudimentary network of Pride organizations and while nothing permanent exists, there is always talk. ▼

Ben Benedict, is a recognized professional visual artist, arts journalist and critic, business writer and public relations consultant with the London region. He is owner and founder of Benedict Creative Communications and can be reached via bcreative.ca

Photo by Ben Benedict

WINDSOR PRIDE

This year Windsor, Ontario is celebrating Pride July 23 to 29 with a week full of special events:

July 23 – Pride Flag Raising Ceremony featuring local dignitaries. 9:30AM – City Hall Square

July 24 – Celebration of Life – AIDS Vigil with the AIDS Committee of Windsor

July 25 – Art on the Lane – A unique outdoor art show featuring the best in local art 5:30PM – Maiden Lane in Downtown Windsor

July 26 – Pride Bowling Night – A free night of bowling courtesy of Windsor Pride. Always a popular event for families with food and drink specials. Rose Bowl Lanes 6:30PM – Sign-up 7PM – Bowling

July 27 – Windsor Pride Presents The Bubble – in partnership with the Windsor International Film Festival – Doors open at 6:30PM. Film will screen at 7:45PM with entertainment to follow. Tickets for both film and performance are \$20. Tickets to see just the film or just performance are \$10.

July 28 – Saturday Summer Sizzle – Riverfront Plaza will come alive with great food, a wide array of vendors sharing their wears and of course, great live entertainment. Riverfront Plaza opens at 4PM, entertainment to start at 7:30PM. Tickets are just \$5.

July 29 – Pride: Front & Centre – A day of Pride for the entire family, featuring our annual Pride Parade through Downtown Windsor, followed by entertainment on stage at Riverfront Plaza. Parade to start at 11AM, entertainment follows the conclusion of the parade. ▼

For more information visit: windsorpride.com

Email: windsorpride@windsorpride.com

Phone: 519.973.4656, for Events, Ext. 99

Watch these local websites for further information:

Guelph:

guelphpride.ouontheshelf.ca

London: pridelondon.ca

Sarnia: sarniapride.ca

Windsor: windsorpride.com

Hamilton:

gay905.com/hamiltonpride

Cambridge:

Kitchener-Waterloo: tri-pride.ca

Halton Region: haltonpride.org

Chatham-Kent: Mike Ondrovic,
President, 519-351-9248



PRIDE TORONTO

TORONTO GETS ITS PRIDE ON

By Doug Ross

And you'll be so happy that we did! So prepare yourself to celebrate all month long as you choose from a delicious fruit cocktail of events that will satisfy even the most demanding diva's eclectic tastes!

Let's kick off with the really great news that Pride Toronto will proudly present the only Canadian tour date for True Colors, the fundraising extravaganza that features an astounding five hours of music from such legendary artists as Cyndi Lauper, Debbie Harry, Erasure and The Dresden Dolls. And putting the "cherry on top" of that special June 19 evening will be the dementedly funny Margaret Cho as your hostess! Proceeds from this landmark event will benefit the Human Rights Campaign that supports GLBT equality. And since Pride Toronto—an organization that exists to celebrate the history, courage, diversity and future for our city's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, and two-spirited community—will also receive a cut of the gate. Hopefully you'll be in the audience applauding wildly.

A quick round-up of other amazing musical acts that also deserve your attention and support are: the always entertaining Scandelles on June 10, "hot and sexy" Rufus Wainwright on June 11 and 12, the crowd-pleasing, folk-singing Indigo Girls on June 23 who will appear on the Pride Mainstage where the admission is free. And let's not forget that country crooning couple Tim McGraw and Faith Hill on June 25. Well why not? He's kind of cute and I think she has great hag potential!

Local drag legends the B-Girlz will have you rolling in the aisles at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre June 14 – 17 as you laugh out loud at their latest "sex, lies and tabloids" revue titled B-Girlz Gone Wild. Don't miss these multi-talented Girlz who've been around the block—more than once or twice—as they belt out a



fabulous K-Tel collection of disco hits while kicking up their heels and dishing the dirt. Be forewarned that your ticket purchase includes an unwritten decree that what happens at a B-Girlz show, stays at a B-Girlz show. And wait, there's more—on June 23 you can also catch those same shameless Girlz hosting their annual fundraiser Homo Night In Canada which this year will benefit the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives that was established to acquire, preserve and organize historical material by and about lesbians and gays primarily produced within our own country. HNHC promises to be an evening of hilarious high-schtick that will feature some of the best gay and lesbian comics—Steven Berezna, Susan Fischer, Andrew Johnston, K-AMP, Dawn Whitwell—so getting an advance ticket is highly recommended since this fundraising event has sold out for the past six consecutive years.

I certainly won't be revealing any secrets by mentioning that the country's largest and most spectacular Pride Parade takes place in Toronto on June 24—but circle June 23 on your calendar as well for the annual Dyke March which is an event that provides a focus on queer women so that all LBT women and other dyke-identified folks of all races, cultures and faiths can participate in an empowering and unifying event that celebrates visibility, inclusiveness, understanding and appreciation within our community.

Although Church Street's gay village will undoubtedly remain the centre of queer activity for the near future, our local numbers are steadily growing, which is causing a little stress at its seams. But actually that kind of expansion is a good thing, so out-of-towners are encouraged to check out the radically diverse and very tolerant neighbourhood located along Queen Street West with its thriving underground gay scene that has recently been recognized as a viable "ghetto" alternative. That funky area's edgy attitude and discreet, but still significant, gay presence exploded a few years back when The Drake became the hotel/hotspot-du-jour for visiting Hollywood royalty and other "see and be seen" hipsters sporting a metrosexual vibe. Then not to be outdone, the city's oldest hotel, The Gladstone—also located along that same gritty, but cool west end strip—underwent renovations wherein a local artist individually designed each room. How chic is that? Also nestled amongst that area's fluid mixture of ethnicities and sexualities can be found some very tasty eateries and bars—Lot 16, the Beaconsfield, Beaver Café—that provide plenty of music, martinis, munchies and madness.

On June 16, the Gay West Community Network presents its annual Queer West Fest event that boasts a big attitude with an alternative bent that celebrates all things queer positive. And then that same organization teams up with the Aids Committee of Toronto to present its special Pride Edition of Java Knights on June 19. JK is a monthly forum that features discussions on topics from sex to politics and everything in between.

The non-profit Gay West Village Bike Club presents its Pride Ride 2007 on June 17 that takes place along the waterfront from Sunnyside to the Beaches located at the eastern end of the city. So grab your water bottle and your vitamins and enjoy some good old-fashioned fun and exercise within a positive social atmosphere.

Wow, so many great events—yet June only has thirty days! So plan your Toronto escapades wisely, remember to play safely and have a fabulous Pride! ▼

Doug is a busy producer/casting director within the Toronto entertainment industry. He has just been contracted to ghostwrite a book for a locally-based television personality.

Photo by Brian Lawrence

BLENDING RETRO CLASSICS

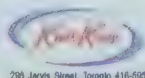
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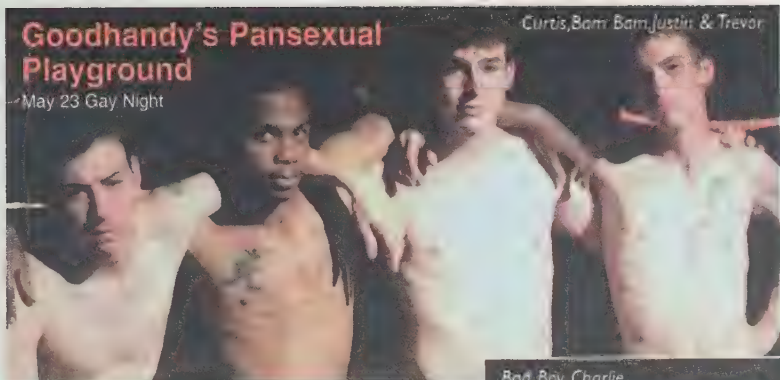


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May 23 Gay Night

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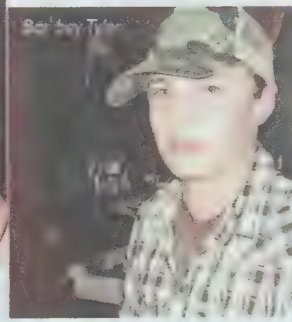


Out & about
TORONTO

Planning an event in Toronto? Contact Jonny at jonny@beyondchurchstreet.com and he'll see about covering it in Out & About. Photos by: Jonny



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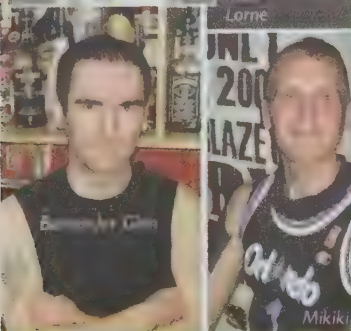
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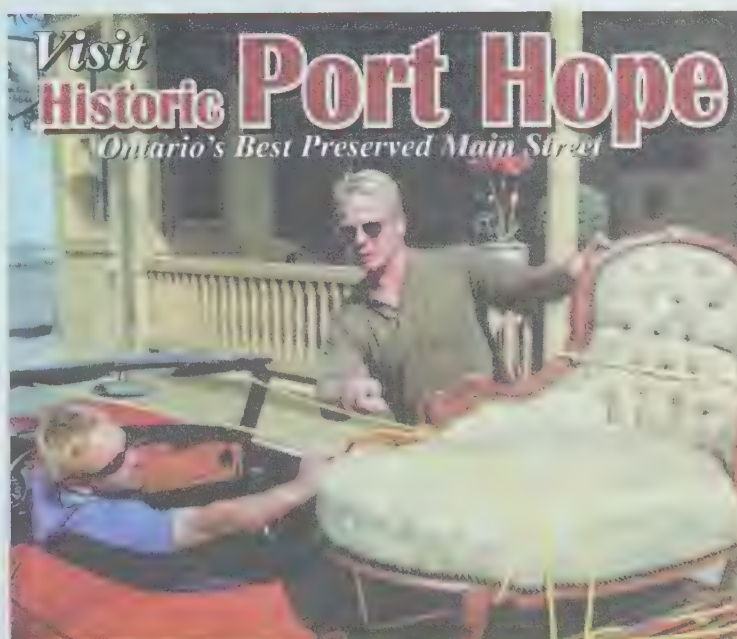
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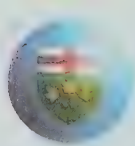
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Last But Not Least

By Dale Smith

Once again, Ottawa remains the last major Pride festival of the season, running August 17 to the 26, with Sunday [the 26] being the main event. Capital Pride's theme this year is Pride is Forever, in keeping with the James Bond/007 tie-ins that have marked their events to date, though there are no confirmed Shirley Bassey impersonators on the roster—yet. As the fourth largest festival in Canada, Capital Pride is calling this a “make or break” year, hoping to finally free themselves of the financial difficulties that have plagued them in the past few years.

Pride festivities kick off on Friday, August 17 with the flag raisings, first at City Hall at 11AM, followed by the Central Police Station (at Isabella and Elgin) at 1 PM, and finally across the river at Gatineau City Hall at 3PM.

Saturday, August 18, will see a new event for Capital Pride, that being a GLBTQ Community Day at Lansdowne Park's Super Ex. A special deal negotiated with the Super Ex gives a special admission and ride prices, and an afternoon women's stage, with some of Ottawa's top drag queens there to welcome everyone.

Pride Week's events are still in the planning stages at press time, but a few have been confirmed to date. Note that this year, Capital Pride is enforcing a policy that only those events donating proceeds to Pride will be listed as official Capital Pride Events. This prevents other businesses and organisations from cashing in on Pride while not giving back to the community.

Some of the successful partnerships of previous years are continuing to grow this year. As well as Leather Fest, which takes place during Pride week, some of the mainstream businesses are keen to renew their partnerships with Capital Pride. One of the most successful partnerships of the past few years has been with Yuk Yuk's comedy club, which runs their Laugh Out Proud series during Pride. That tradition continues again this year from Thursday, August 23 through to Saturday August 25. The success of this partnership is so great that it has allowed for Yuk Yuk's to help pay for the cost of the Pride Festival's MC, which is a tremendous help to Capital Pride's organisers.



Saturday, August 25 is the annual Dyke March, slated to take over Elgin Street, and will end with a ball game and a barbeque. Saturday night will be the Rainbow Party 8, to be headlined by Australian DJ Jesse James. Venue and ticket prices are still being determined at press time, but Capital Pride is making this event a priority this year. One way they are refocusing their efforts is by no longer holding the Saturday afternoon t-dance, in order to keep both the organisers and the crowd's attentions focused on the Rainbow Party.

Sunday, August 26, is the Big Day, starting with the twenty-first annual Pride Parade, beginning at 1PM. The parade route remains the same as the past two years, starting at the Park of the Provinces, travelling down Wellington Street in front of the Supreme Court of Canada building and Parliament Hill before turning down Elgin Street and ending up once again at Festival Plaza outside of City Hall. This helps to keep the symbolism Capital Pride, so that our national institutions are recognised in the context of Pride in Canada, from the Supreme Court granting us our rights, to Parliament which has passed many laws extending rights to the gay and lesbian community, from the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to the recent legislation of same-sex marriages in this country. This year, local activist Christine Schulz has been chosen to be the Parade Marshal.

The Pride Day Show runs from 3 to 11PM, with comedian Trevor Boris signed on to be this year's event MC. Other performers through the day will include the Dragon Ritual Drummers, the Herb Girls, and Amanda Jahnke. The Festival Plaza site will be consolidated onto the main field this year, which will include the beer gardens, the KidsCan area, and the Info Fair. Integrating the Info Fair to the main ground last year proved to be a popular move and a big success, and the Capital Pride organisers are keen to repeat it. Access to the Festival Plaza grounds will again have a \$5 entry charge the day of the event, with cheaper admission prices to be found during the pre-sale period. With some thirty to fifty thousand people expected to attend, Capital Pride is the perfect way to end off the Pride season.

For more information, visit the Capital Pride website at prideottawa.com

Dale Smith is a freelance writer in Ottawa. He is also a regular contributor to Capital Xtra and Ottawa Xpress, and an occasional contributor to the Hill Times

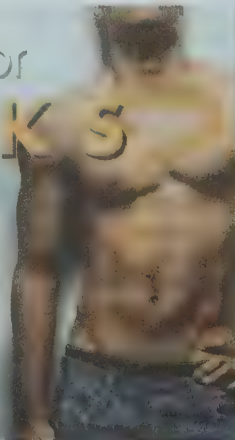
Photos by Jeremy Diaz from Ottawa Pride 2006



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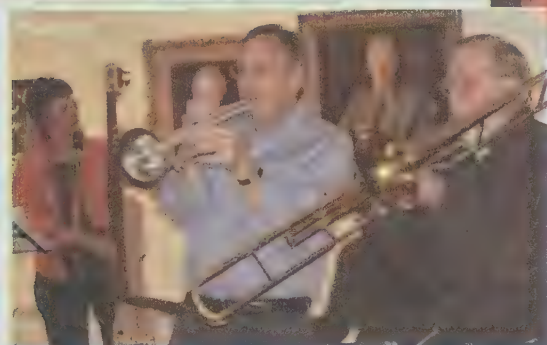


March of Remembrance & Hope

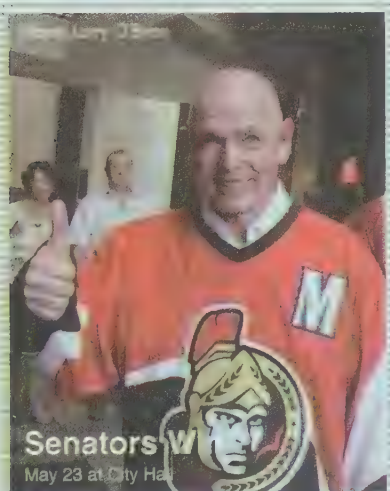
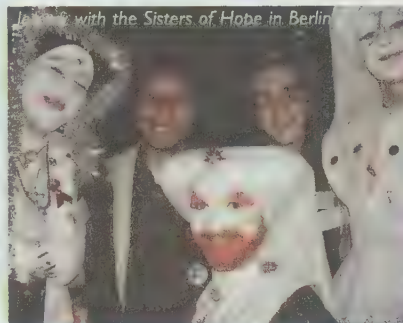
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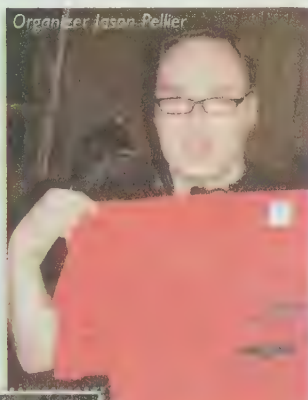
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Divers/Cité Becomes a Gay Divorcée

By David King

After a fifteen-year, unusually arranged marriage, Montréal's Divers/Cité has officially dumped 'Pride' from its arts and culture-based mandate and programming.

On the heels of carefully consulting Montréal's GLBT groups, and counter to any angry residue from shocked, loud-spoken 'villagers' (sadly and often the only ones who attend community consultations), Divers/Cité founder and organizer Suzanne Girard affirms Divers/Cité's recent decision is a bold but necessary new move.

"Divers/Cité wasn't founded with Pride in its charter," Girard assures, "nor did it ever exist to speak for the 'community', however you define that. We're a cultural festival. This decision truthfully has liberated us, and allows us

to commercialize a little more, which we always felt the need to restrain when 'Pride' was attached to things."

Thanks to Divers/Cité, Montréal's Pride-related activities have indeed come unto their own over the last decade and a half, winning the organization three top tourism awards while doubling, tripling, and then surpassing all participation expectations as a major international event. Once a rubber-gloved, mini-march of solidarity against the badly handled 'Sex Garage Scandal', Divers/Cité quickly became an annual spirit of sorts, consistently renewing itself to maintain a creative and political edge that has distinguished Montréal from increasingly commercialized, worldwide Pride events.

For Montréalers, an era is over in this divorce. After altering its charter to clearly reflect its artistic mandate as an organizer of large-scale summer entertainment, Divers/Cité did tap into its years of experience to throw its full consult behind the incorporation of an entirely separate new Pride group, Fierté Montréal Pride, which after start-up sessions quickly fizzled into oblivion.

"Every time we've made a change we've had this huge response," says Girard. "Change is difficult, but from an organizational context, we are striving to make each year better. It could all be the greatest show on earth, but if nobody's looking at it, it won't work, and that can be difficult to see if you're not on the organizational end."



At some point, adds a still-energized Girard, time for talk simply runs out when you're the 'doer'. It's a lesson she's learned after years of municipal negotiations, fundraising, and coordination of everything from quaint art gallery exhibits to kick-ass drag galas like Mascara (celebrating its tenth anniversary this summer). Having started Divers/Cité within an entirely male-dominated business community, Girard's since secured an office, a small full-time staff, and dedicated sub-contractors and volunteers who return faithfully year-to-year. Along the way, she's developed a confident ability to ward off territorial beer wars in Montréal's village and disregard 'bitch' poison from creative and developmental ideas for Divers/Cité's growth.

Girard's brief stint as Vice-President of InterPride (one of the only Canuck seats to date) has given her a strong perspective on not only where Montréal fares internationally, but also the hot seat that even coordinators regularly face. Divers/Cité's independence from last year's OutGames, along with its recent shift to a Mardi-Gras style night parade reliant on local attendance (a parade Girard now fondly calls "The Parade of Little Matches") are but mere examples of risk-taking decisions that can come under heavy scrutiny.

"People have had this propriety aspect to Divers/Cité," says Girard, "and I think that comes with organizing this type of event. Our job was never necessarily to give people what they want, and collectively, they don't know what they want. Some community groups are just dissatisfied all the time, yet individually you talk to them, and it's totally different. Now there's a need for reviving participation in Montréal."

Girard's concerns these days have shifted towards arts funding to nurture Divers/Cité's continued growth. As she notes, that's not easy in a funding system where GLBTQ "culture" is viewed differently on federal, provincial and municipal levels.

"Every year funding changes," Girard notes, "but that's the industry isn't it? Everyone works really hard, but we're willing, and there's room for growth. We're fortunate to have a truly exceptional team."

'Teamwork' is a magic word at Divers/Cité. For years staff went without official titles and didn't want them, collaborating ground up to meet deadlines while freelancers and sub-contractors hopped on for the ride. This year, as Divers/Cité drops its InterPride status and aligns itself with other non-pride, alternative queer fests around the world, the sights are set on investing in greater productions values, increasing multi-disciplinary programming and building larger outdoor stages for Montréal's Berri Square. Performances like Mascara, Sex Garage and Carte Blanche will all return, along with a film night, Latin stage night and exhibits. If all goes well, Girard eventually hopes to revive the popular but costly Flaxx, a sadly missed event from Divers/Cité's past line-up.

For now, grinning and bearing what she deems her usual "tarring and feathering", Girard's excited, nervous and proud about this year's biggest gay divorce. As she signs the divorce papers, she's well aware of the natural slip in attendance figures ahead for Divers/Cité as its 'Pride' spouse goes under the radar, but she's looking forward to seeing Divers/Cité return to its intended mission.

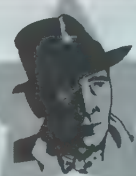
"At fifteen, Divers/Cité is a very healthy and well-balanced teenager," laughs Girard. "Sexually active, and definitely gay, in that Montréal way."

Divers/Cité hits the streets of Montreal from August 1 to 5. For more info, visit diverscite.org.

David King is a freelance journalist currently residing in Montreal. A writer, performer and director, he is the co-founding Artistic Director of Montreal's OUT Productions.

Photos Courtesy of Divers/Cité from Pride 2006

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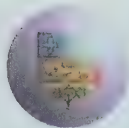
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PRIDE MONTREAL

Montréal Pride Takes A Breathe

By David King

In a rapid-fire, reverse decision this past May, the newly organized Montréal Pride organization (or Célébration de la fierté LGB2T de Montréal) suddenly disbanded, leaving Montréalers without a Pride parade and community activities for the first time in fifteen years.

Picking up where Divers/Cité left off when Divers/Cité dropped the parade and Community Day from its annual programming, hands-on support and consultation from Divers/Cité was simply not enough to kick-start a new Montreal Pride in 2007. On the heels of last year's fiscally sour OutGames (whose deficit continues to make headlines), new city street restrictions, and a lack of consensus on a new Pride from the community groups that were consulted, the event's cancellation coincided with the winding down of the organization itself. An all-too brief bulletin has circulated to media and community groups, leaving internal issues that may have arisen unaddressed.

"Pride for me is something very important, coming from Lebanon where it is still criminalized," stresses organizer Nada Raphael, who was set to spearhead the event. "I keep thinking to myself how much we could do in the next five years—who knows for sure—to send a message to countries like Lebanon, or even sponsor another Pride in some way."

After coordinating a local Lebanese group for the protection of gays and lesbians for three years, Raphael helped organize Divers/Cité's Community Day last year, along with Montréal's recent Ethnocultural Day. In an increasingly connected world where start-up Pride events are resulting in often dangerous, life-threatening conditions, she was the right energy Montréal needed for that world-class, sustainable influence.

Until now, Raphael was staying as attentive as possible to local community groups, learning the pink ropes from Divers/Cité's years of expertise and attending InterPride's Portland annual general meeting last year. She has a keen interest in outreach to youth, particularly after assisting on a key government finding on rampant homophobia still affecting schools across Québec. After her consultations, Raphael found some key players from the community to help advise a new Pride board, with an interest in bringing back Montréal's parade this September as a daytime event.

Now, as Célébration de la fierté LGB2T de Montréal disbands and Raphael forfeits that position, the future of Pride sits in the hands of Montréal's diverse community groups, who have clearly proven their lack of a 'collective' voice on the matter. As Divers/Cité hits Berri Square this August for its usual line-up of breathtaking large-scale concerts and events, a giant question mark may loom over everyone's heads as to whether or not Montréal will see a Pride Parade and Community Day in years to come. As Raphael had assured, there is always room for hope.

"I don't know what will happen yet, but there has been consultation in the community and a small consultation group for ideas. Whatever we do, there are always going to be those who like it or not. In Montréal, you have a lot of community groups with truly different missions from one another, and we can't move ahead with only negative viewpoints. Pride is something common to everyone, and if everyone sees a positive move, things will move forward. A hand alone cannot clap." ▼

David King is a freelance journalist currently residing in Montreal. A writer, performer and director, he is the co-founding Artistic Director of Montreal's OUT Productions.



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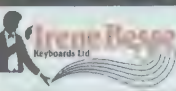
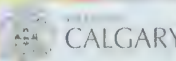
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OUTLOOKS

June 2007

41



Pride in the Maritimes

By Ralph Higgins

East coast queers are standing proud and tall these days. Moncton, Sydney, and Charlottetown are just a few of the Maritime cities where public celebrations of queerness will honour who we are this summer. Whether it's a small group of friends who gather to wave a rainbow flag and make merry or large throngs taking to the streets proclaiming our joy through dance, laughter and visual display, the sense of community that is fostered at pride events enlivens the heart and spirit of GLBTQ's throughout the year.

The perfect example of the growing strength of the queer community here in the east, is the Halifax Pride celebrations. Twenty years ago a mere handful of queer folk marched—and then, more in protest than celebration. Compare that with last year when more than 5,000 people took part in the Pride Parade and over 15,000 lined the streets to wave, smile, whistle and cheer their support. Halifax Pride celebrations are now the fourth largest in Canada and growing!

The theme of Halifax Pride this year is Diversity, a recognition of the vast spectrum of people and possibilities existing both in and outside the queer community. Increasingly there is support—financial, social and political—being offered, crossing the rather fluid territorial lines of the gay community. Banks, airlines, police departments, government branches—even some churches—are just a few of the organizations demonstrating their support of queer family members, friends and colleagues. Nowhere is that more prominently displayed than during the week-long celebration in Nova Scotia's capital.

New features are being added this year, though not all have been confirmed as of this writing. A wine tasting in the nearby Annapolis Valley would be a lovely and leisurely way to enjoy the fruits of our labours, or, for those whose tastes are a bit earthier, a beer garden. The Tall Ships organization will join with Halifax

Pride this year to sponsor an event, which is not yet finalized.

But, of course, all of the old favourites will be back like Queer Comedy Night, Reading Out Loud and the Queer Film Festival showcasing the best of queer talent. A garden tour is a civilized way to pass an afternoon, while size queens can amuse themselves deciding which gardener has the biggest dahlia. The folks at Capitol Health, who have recently been recognized for their positive efforts in fighting homophobia, will once again sponsor a family picnic.

The annual Dykes and Divas softball game where women and drag queens vie for sport supremacy is always a crowd pleaser. More than two thousand people attended this fun confrontation last year, making it the second most attended event of Halifax Pride.

Kicking off all the activities is the proclamation and rainbow flag raising by Mayor Peter Kelly. This important symbolic act is a clear reminder that inclusion must march hand in hand with diversity. That colourful banner snapping in the brisk Atlantic wind never fails to raise a strong emotional response.

Maritimers have a reputation for knowing how to throw a good party and there can be no clearer evidence of this than the Pride Parade. All other activity in the city comes to a halt while leather men, drag queens, members of PFLAG, youth groups, gay athletes, dykes on bikes, politicians, mothers pushing strollers, police officers, dancers, musicians and hundreds of others gather to stomp, cheer, sing, chant, and claim our place. Ordinary men and women—bisexual, gay, straight, lesbian, queer, or transgendered—become part of the extraordinary as we join together on this Saturday afternoon.

The Parade will follow the same route as last year, ending at The Commons whose fields and open spaces will take on the aspect of a medieval fair, with a generous helping of glitz and sequined glamour. An open air concert is scheduled at the conclusion of the parade and, as usual, lots of booths will be operating offering everything from face painting, t-shirts to AIDS information. The parade and celebrations following always feel like a giant family reunion. A chance to reconnect with old friends and an opportunity to maybe meet some unknown off shoots of the queer family tree (As the twig is bent...). To wander through the milling crowd of very diverse individuals and know that there is a place where you belong and are welcome is an unforgettable feeling.

The Pride committee is still busily setting up and finalizing activities so check their website halifaxpride.com for up to date details of time and venues.

Halifax Pride, July 15- July 22. See you there! ▼

Ralph Higgins is a writer, columnist and book/movie reviewer living in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia.

Photos by Wade Swinimer Halifax Pride 2006



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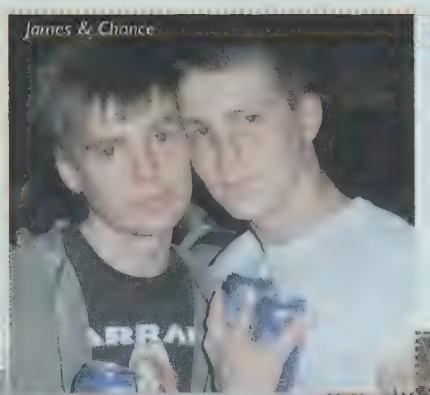
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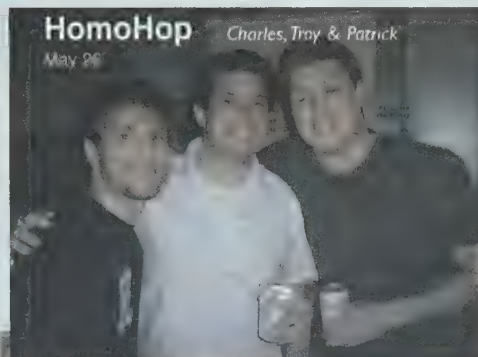
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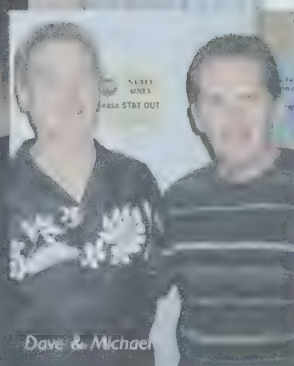
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April 24 at the Vancouver Club



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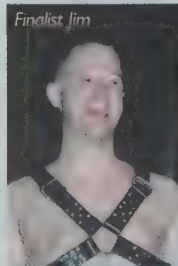
Attendees

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Finalist Jim



Mike (MC) & finalists Jim, Phil, Brian

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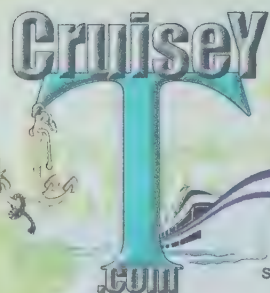
Pussy Poles & Robert
Groves in their boy suits



Carla & Gail with friend
The Majestic space



Birthday girl Barb



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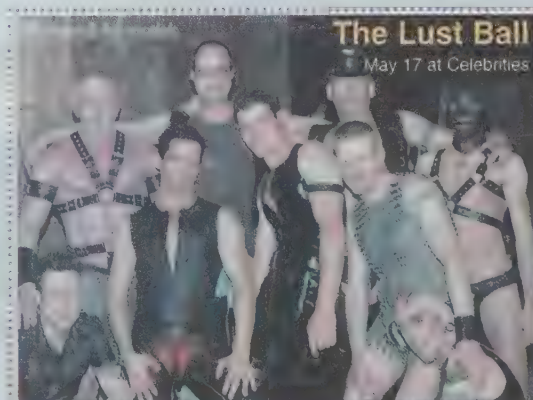
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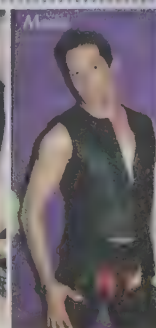
May 17 at Celebrities



Pomstar
Jonny



Pride models onstage



DI Marc Tatu

IN THE NEWS



SHOOTING STARS FOUNDATION'S STELLAR CELEBRATION

The Shooting Stars Foundation presented \$104,500 in grants on April 24 at the Vancouver Club at their annual Stellar Celebration generously sponsored by Bill Watt of TRG Group Benefits & Pensions Inc. The eleven deserving Direct Service AIDS organization recipients are; Catherine Ewing - A Loving Spoonful (\$10,000), Soni Thindall - ASIA (Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS) (\$5,000), Ken Buchanan - BC Persons With AIDS Society (\$10,000), Luke Balson - Western Canadian Pediatric AIDS Society - Camp Moomba (\$10,000), Maxine Davies - Dr. Peters AIDS Foundation (\$10,000), Donald Allen - DTES HIV/IDU Consumers' Board (\$2,500), Cynthia Low - DTES Women's Centre (\$10,000), Lori Montgomery - Heart of Richmond AIDS Society (\$7,000), JoAnne Fahr - McLaren Housing Society (\$10,000), Donna Tenant - Positive Women's Network (\$10,000), Wayne Campbell - Wing's Housing Society (\$10,000) and one grant of \$10,000 was endowed for the 'future' to the Shooting Stars Endowment Fund. These monies were raised throughout the Shooting Stars Foundation's 2006 stellar events calendar that include Fit For a Queen, Vancity's Starry Night, Motown Meltdown, Under Cover and the Gambado dinner and auction. ▼

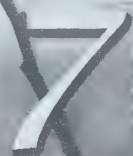


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OUTLOOKS

June 2007

45

By Josh Murray

While elaborate theories abound, the reason for Katie Couric's disappointing results as the talking head of CBS News might actually be quite simple—the influence of nightly newscasts is on the decline. Online sources are providing faster, more reactive knowledge portals—particularly for tech savvy gay audiences—and bloggers are at the forefront of a media revolution that is changing the way the world understands gay themes and issues.

perezhilton.com



Smartly-named Perez Hilton, a.k.a. Mario Lavandeira, is now responsible for the web's leading gossip resource after the twenty-nine year-old self-proclaimed "queen of all media" saw his celeb-centric site rocket to infamy in 2005 with its mix of salacious rumour and substantiated fact. The blog features gossip, media recommendations, paparazzi photos and—most importantly to readers—detailed accounts of the ups and downs of Hollywood's many starlets. The message boards that are on perezhilton.com are often jammed with both overtly critical and unwaveringly encouraging responses from readers around the globe.

While the gay-friendly site racks up millions in daily visits, its notoriety has provided for anything but an easy ride for its creator. Critics have panned his tactics, labeling the site everything from "cheeky" to "tabloid terrorism". His posts on the private lives of celebrities—and celebrity children—have sparked outrage. Even former employer, GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), called Lavandeira's influence in public outings (most notably, those of Lance Bass and Neil Patrick Harris) "problematic". Others have instead taken their criticism straight to a court of law. A number of Hollywood photo agencies have banded together in lawsuits that seek nearly \$15 million in damages from Lavandeira, for allegedly inappropriate use of images and copyright infringement.

Ultimately, though, any legal ramifications will be a long time coming. In the meantime, the site will undoubtedly continue to boast impressive visitor tallies each day with its undeniably provocative updates on celebrity trial and tribulation.

goodasyou.org

If gossip from Tinseltown is too fluffy, more pressing gay-themed news is the subject of GoodAsYou.org (or G-A-Y). The site's editor, New York-based writer and activist Jeremy Hooper, tackles all manner of gay news with irreverent charm—and thorough research.

"Accuracy comes first," he explains, noting that readers are often just a click away from the press release, legislation or e-mail discussed in a specific post. "I think the transparency of the medium, in many ways, makes blogging a more trustworthy way of conveying information."

The site features frequent discussions of political and social topics that have a direct effect on the gay community, but Hooper points out that he doesn't write solely for the GLBT audience. "Gay rights issues affect us all. Virtually everyone knows someone or has a family member who is gay—even if they don't know it yet. G-A-Y is written from a human perspective, not a specifically gay one."

Support for the site comes from around the globe—and from the most unexpected places. The Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kansas is well known in America for its controversial teachings and demonstrations—including pickets at the funerals of Matthew Shepard and over 80 American soldiers killed in Iraq. They are, unquestionably, on the opposite end of the gay rights spectrum as goodasyou.org. Still Hooper has been surprised to hear of their admittedly mild support. "Most of the feedback from gay rights opponents tends to be along the lines of, 'I disagree with you wholly, but I appreciate the way you address the issues.' And some—including Westboro Baptist's Shirley Phelps-Roper—have even told me they enjoy the humor. I think it's because, at G-A-Y, character attacks are not the order of the day. It is the issues that we attack, not the people themselves," Hooper says.

The challenge in taking up those issues can be daunting as the United States seems so far behind other, more progressive nations, like Canada. "Few people realize what a coordinated anti-gay campaign there is in this country. Our 'pro-



family' groups issue press releases, e-mail blasts, missives and bulletins every day that propagate false information about the gay community. It is of utmost importance that we challenge each and every one of these disinformation campaigns, and show people how, exactly, these flawed ideas get out."

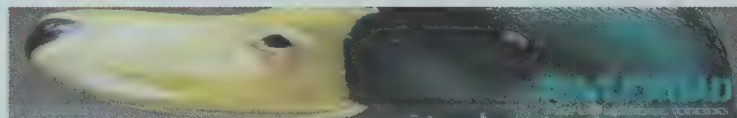
queerty.com

Gay rights support meets celebrity fodder at queerty.com. The thinking (gay) man's web address is a smart, thorough combination of news and gossip—with the occasional eye candy thrown in for good measure.

Editorial Director David Hauslaib is a familiar face in the online world as the founder of the successful jossip.com site that focuses on Manhattan-specific media and celebrity. Queerty was born, he has said, "out of a gaping void in online publishing." Aside from adult-themed gay sites, few pages provided insight for the GLBT community in earlier days of the 'net so he developed a page with "a healthy mix of style and fashion, entertainment and celebrity, news and politics and, yes, relationships and sex."

Apparently, his work has paid off. Queerty was heralded as the Best Gay Weblog at the 2006 Bloggie Awards and Hauslaib has continued to succeed online, turning his attention to another powerful, and under-represented, minority group. His most recent project, the just-launched stereohyped.com, caters to an African-American audience and touts the witty, and explanatory, tagline "Once you blog black, you never go back."

towleroad.com

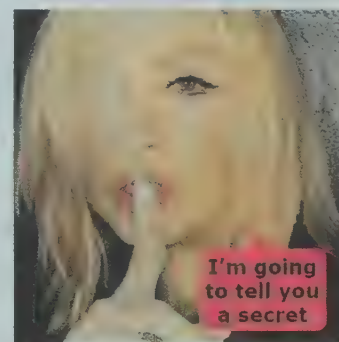


Also nominated along side Queerty at the 2006 Bloggie Awards was towleroad.com. The site is a more news-focused destination that bills itself as "a premium site for modern, gay men". Andy Towle, the site's creator, is no stranger to gay publishing. He previously enjoyed a stint as Editor-in-Chief of Genre and has worked with Out Traveler. In 2003, he began the towleroad.com project that he deems "a blog with homosexual tendencies." It has now become his full-time job. The stark, black background of the page is filled daily with updates on news items of interest to its gay readership as well as updates on celebrities of the moment that appeal to the same demographic.

After nearly four years online, the site shows no sign of slowing down. In fact, in January 2007, it captured the attention of 500,000 unique visitors just months after Out included creator Towle in its 2006 list of the "Out 100", their annual ranking of the most powerful gay men and women in America.

pinkisthenewblog.com

If gay political battles in a Republican-led America are too disheartening, escape with a few frivolous updates about the whereabouts of Britney Spears. Trent Vanegas, a former teacher and now full-time blogger based in Los Angeles, began his oft-visited celebrity gossip site pinkisthenewblog.com in 2004 and rose to prominence as the leading online spot for all-Britney, all the time. His daily updates do stray often to other celebrities, films, television shows and media personalities, but it is his entertaining coverage of pop's most troubled princess that has helped him achieve astounding daily visitor numbers—and more than a few celebrity fans.



Grammy winners The Dixie Chicks have e-mailed over well wishes celebrating the site's trademark giddy nature and TV personality Nicole Richie even referenced the site's web address in a recent, best-selling book. ▼

Josh Murray is a freelance writer. His own daily blog, ohmyjosh.ca, focuses on celebrity and news items—with a Canadian slant.



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Music:

Lesbians on Ecstasy: We Know You Know (Alien8 Recordings)

By Dale Smith

If you fear that lesbian music is nothing but acoustic guitars and tambourines, you haven't met *Lesbians on Ecstasy*. This, their second outing, infuses their signature dance style with the "Womyn's Music" of yesteryear. The result is a unique blend of infectious sounds that you want to crank up loud.

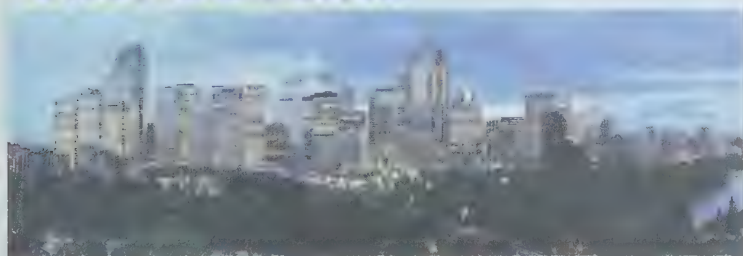
Much of the inspiration for the album was drawn from catalogue of Olivia Records back in the '70s, as well as other small, independent

women-run labels. The ethos of that era is reflected in the album's artwork, from the very retro animation of the cover, to the fashions sported by the band on the interior (though the octapad and synthesisers they are posing with are a much more modern touch). But this is *Lesbians on Ecstasy*, and they're not just going to do heartfelt covers of this old material. No, they're going to make it their own.

The sound is loud, heavy, and electronic, from the guitars, to the drum loops, to the sound effects on some tracks. Even when the old choruses about sisterhood are put to this modern treatment, it gives it a unique flavour that you won't find anywhere else. One track, *Victoria's Secret*, even includes a female computer voice amidst the pounding electro—definitely not your acoustic guitars and tambourines. Okay, so the final track, *Mortified*, has guitars and tambourines, but tongues seem firmly planted in cheeks with a few of the lyrics the *Lesbians* sing. Other great tracks include *Sisters in the Struggle*, and *The Cold Touch of Leather*. As a kind of bonus track, the *Lesbians* also cover *Is This The Way*, which most listeners will recognise as the theme song to *The L Word*, but much better done with a more dark and dramatic sound. *We Know You Know* is an album you know you don't want to miss. ▼



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Books:

Red Carpets and Other Banana Skins

Rupert Everett
Warner Books
2007

By Dale Smith

For a while, he was one of the most recognisable openly gay faces in the business—and then he faded into the background. And while most people in North America only ever really think of *My Best Friend's Wedding* as his breakout role, Rupert Everett has had quite a career, from rent boy, to actor, to musician, to model, and even novelist, there is no doubt that he has seen and done a lot.

But what may not be so apparent is just how much Everett has actually lived. More than just his career in film, Everett was a figure who was immersed in the culture of stardom from an early age, when he befriended Andy Warhol and Bianca Jagger and Sir Ian McKellen, to his later much-publicised friendship with Madonna. Everett has many a story to tell about the way things used to be, and the way that Hollywood seems to be in a state of decline. Everett's accounts of the way things work in the industry are not flattering or candy-coated. His own experiences of being chewed up and spat out by the studio system are worth a read, especially the way he puts the whole experience of *The Next Best Thing* into perspective. It's quite a ride, especially when you read some of the accounts of factions plotting against one another, and how a film project that could have been a huge hit slowly got dragged down to the infamous flop that it became.

More than that, Everett has witnessed first-hand some truly remarkable moments of our time, including when he was filming in Moscow during the collapse of communism the year that everything changed. Reading his accounts of the way things were to the way things are today is certainly eye opening.

What we don't really get is Everett's kiss-and-tell book—at least, not so much with the men in his life. There is some brief talk of a longer-term relationship with one man in particular that has since ended, there is very little about his sexual exploits. Everett even glosses over his infamous past as a rent-boy, reducing it to a mere paragraph. What he does give us, however, is a bit more scandal with the women he's slept with, and there were a few.

As he had already proved with his two previous novels, Everett certainly knows how to write, and he puts his literary talents to good use in his autobiography. What he turns out is an eminently readable tale, alive with rich description and unadulterated bitchery. The book was a complete page-turner, and one never has to fear any particular dry bits, because all of it is infused with Everett's clever bon mots and his acid tongue. ▼

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in *Capital Xtra* and *Ottawa Xpress*, and he has previously written for *XY Magazine*.

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Chicken Tikka Masala

Directed by: Harmage Singh Kalirai

From: tla Releasing

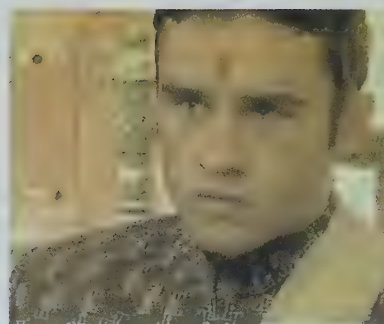
Running Time: 92 minutes

Release Date: 2006

By Dale Smith

In the growing genre of comedies about clashing cultures with immigrant families in Western culture, *Chicken Tikka Masala* tackles being gay and Indian in English society. Set in the city of Preston, the film opens with Jimi (Chris Bisson) returning home from medical school to his family's home to meet Simran (Jinder Mahal), the relative of a relative, and when the pair get along, their families scheme and arrange their marriage behind their backs, but according to their star charts, they must be wed within seven days if they are to have happiness.

Jimi carries on with life, unaware of what is going on until he is summoned home for a party, and is ambushed when he finds out that it's his engagement party. A healthy dose of guilt later about his father's health and how great-grandchildren would be good for his grandmother when she gets to heaven, Jimi plays along with the engagement. But when he



returns to his place that night, his boyfriend Jack (Peter Ash) is not amused. But, having already been thrown out of his father's home, Jack moved in with his aunt Vanessa (Sally Bankes) and her daughter Hannah (Katy Clayton) along with Jimi, and three years later, he's not about to let Jimi go, nor is he willing to just be Jimi's bit on the side.

When Hannah conspires to break off Jimi's engagement after an accidental meeting with Simran, she has Jimi's family believe that she is actually Jimi's daughter, which calls off the wedding immediately. But when Jimi's parents come looking to find out just who the mother is, Jimi pleads with Vanessa to play the part of his girlfriend until his family gets off his back. But with a wedding already arranged, and not willing to be humiliated by cancelling it, Jimi's parents conspire to arrange Jimi's marriage to Vanessa instead, believing that's what he wants, and it only gets that much more complicated.

The film was enjoyable, and certainly carried a great message about family and culture, but what it lacked was any particular sense that Jimi and Jack were really together. The pair were very much the desexualised gay characters from television, where the most affection we see between them is Jimi putting his arm around Jack for one brief moment. However, the character performances, especially from Vanessa and the grandmother, were an absolute delight to watch.

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work also regularly appears in *Capital Xtra* and *Ottawa Xpress*, and he has previously written for *XY Magazine*.

Photos Courtesy of TLA Releasing



he finds out that it's his engagement party. A healthy dose of guilt later about his father's health and how great-grandchildren would be good for his grandmother when she gets to heaven, Jimi plays along with the engagement. But when he

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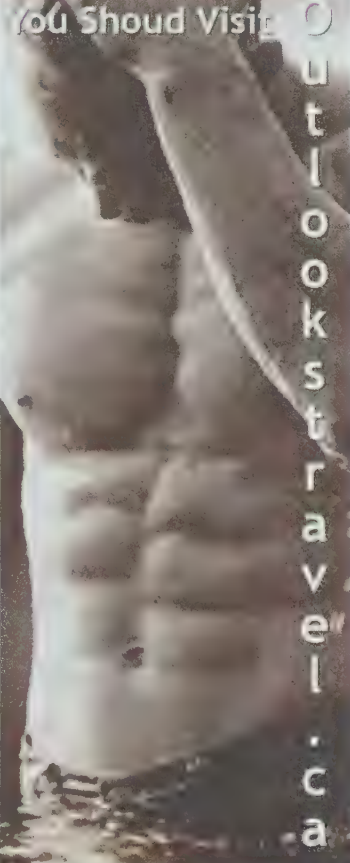
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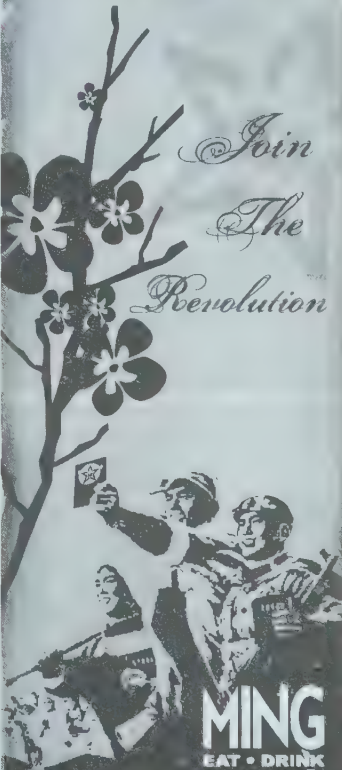
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Opened on July 1, 2003, Axel Hotel Barcelona is the first hotel of the Axel Hotels chain and the first designer hotel directed toward the gay community. After more than three successful years of operation, it is apparent that Axel Hotel Barcelona has signified style and has become the world standard for gay accommodations.

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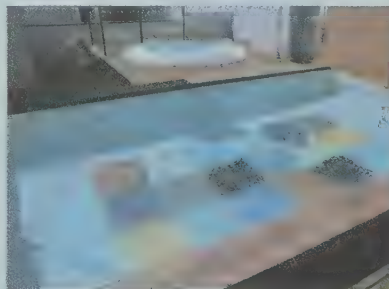
Barcelona's gay district, ten minutes from the most stylish places in the city, el Borne and the Casco Antiguo. Without forgetting its architecture and design: the Axel Hotel Barcelona was constructed in a remodelled building from the end of the 19th century, preserving its façade and its spectacular acid-etched windows from the first modernist period. Its interior spaces, totally restored, were conceived in order that design and comfort are united in a warm atmosphere. Furnishings from Vitra, Kartell and Swan, fabrics from Kenzo, the Axel mosaic and the lighted photograph boxes by Emilio Lekuona shape the exclusive Axel universe.

The hotel has sixty-six rooms, including ten Superior rooms and the Axel Suite, each one with its own personality and careful design. All of them are soundproofed, have central air and heat, are bright and very comfortable, with king size beds, four pillows, bathrobes, plasma television with Internet and a la carte video with thirty movies to choose from, wi-fi connection for laptop computers, and room service.

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For these reasons, the Axel Hotel Barcelona was chosen as "The Best Gay Hotel in the World" by the readers of the prestigious travel magazine *The Out Traveler* (USA).

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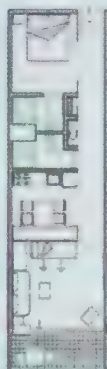
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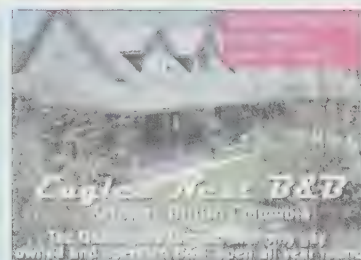
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Index...

100 - Employment	400 - Personals
office 101	massage 401
domestic 102	friends 402
trades 103	models 403
service industry 104	dating services 404
work wanted 105	announcements 405
help wanted 106	phone lines 406
gardening services 107	general 407
salespersons wanted 108	health services 408
retail salesperson 109	personal services 409
	personal growth 410
	escorts 411
200 - Real Estate	500 - Announcements
homes and condos for sale 201	birthdays 501
homes, apartments, and suites for rent 202	anniversary 502
shared accommodations 203	obituary 503
accommodations 204	in memoriam 504
vacation rentals 205	notices 505
office space for rent 207	general 507
real Estate Agent 208	lost & found 508
office space wanted 209	services 509
	weddings 510
300 - For Sale	600 - Travel
automobiles 301	accommodations 601
home furnishings 302	travel Alberta 602
artworks 303	travel BC 603
computers 304	travel Quebec 604
general and miscellaneous 305	travel international 605
garage sales 306	general 606
pets 307	
	700 - Business
	services 701
	business opportunity 702

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HOROSCOPE II

Ramp up the Pride this June as Venus spreads the love into bold and proud Leo. Are we just too wonderful for words? I know I'm speechless.



ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

There is a rumor going around that you are just not yourself these days. Some might say that you are better than usual. Venus in Leo ramps up your charm, charisma and general mellowness. Proud Rams will find new ways of expressing themselves that not only make themselves feel more at ease but also light up a room for everyone else. Keep it going as long as you can.



TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls will be the great peacemakers this Pride month and can make new inroads into any familial logjam. The secret to your success will lie in your ability to make your point, be yourself and bring stubborn relatives to your side of the table. Remember: there can be no compromise with your personal happiness and well-being. Others will have to adjust.



GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Not only will you have a few sharp opinions to share, you'll also have the adoring audience hanging on your every word. Venus in Leo will provide power, passion and a pride parade of admirers. Say what you mean and mean what you say. You are known for diplomacy and this Pride month offers you even more charm per square inch. How about making it ten to twelve?



CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

If you hanker for some expensive company, pull out your chequebook this Pride month and pay the way. You will not regret spending a little to get a lot more. Pink Crabs will be rather careful with their dough, but now you'll increase your largess by spreading it all around town. Become increasingly well endowed as Venus offers you an unexpected lump sum in your pocket.



LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Venus will shine in your sign this Pride month and make you a supernova of the social set. Nicely push your way into new circles of influence. There is no better time to get out and meet and greet. Be prepared to launch new projects. There will be people of influence who will help grease the way for your eventual success. The more grease the better, or so I am told.



VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

Pride month is the time to let the ghosts and goblins out for a stroll. "Wilde" and woolly daydreams can lead to true lust for any queer Virgin who allows their imaginations to run amok. The challenge is to give your imagination full reign and not be concerned about the spillage. Venus in Leo wants it all—and covered in gold. This month it is all Out or bust.



LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

Proud Libras can lead the Pride parade this June. This will be the time to be very sociable. You impress almost anyone with relatively little effort. Grab a few pals, get into the center of things and take this merry band into the streets. Not only can you take any cause one giant step forward, you can also enjoy a few boozy detours along the way. No names please!



SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

Not only will you make dramatic inroads into any career path, you can also slide by and delegate most of your worst projects to others. Proud Scorps may be best served by capitalizing on their increased charisma this pride month. Grease a few cogs in that corporate machine and see who revs your engine. Hey, whatever gets you off the treadmill and into the corner office!



SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

Pack your bags, polish your act and join a road company. Who knows what delightful surprises await you in far corners of the globe? Staying at home and phoning it in will not have the same glorious feeling or the same payoff. My crystal ball sees an exotic foreigner in a delicious outfit, ready to be eaten. Remember, you are who you eat... or something like that.



CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

You are the one to see and be seen with all through Pride month. Everyone seems to crave your company. But is that really enough for you? Will it keep you warm at night? Pink Caps secretly yearn for a one to one connection and would love to either get closer with a current flame or heat up another candle. See who and what makes you sweat.



AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

Relationships will become the be all and end all for Aqueerians this Pride Month. Partners have a way of transforming how you appear to others either by suggesting some much needed style changes or providing you with that confident spring in your step that can beat down the world. Make your mark, but share the glory. They say two heads are better than one and I must agree.



PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Guppies will make some work-related inroads this Pride month. And why not? It may not be the most exciting of prospects but it will give you an extra advantage for future gains. Venus in Leo makes you the center of attention. Why not paint your cubicle hot pink while the glow is on you. By next month you will find it harder to make your mark... unless you use grease.

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Featuring: James Roberts, Ross Barr, Jason Oakley, Jay Lee, Mighel Wilkes, Luke Strong, Ryan Reynolds, Charlie Richards, Johnny Critten, Mikey Davis, Amsterdam Antony, Anthony James, Adam Dean

Running Time: 95 minutes

Some people may think that British offices are very stuffy, serious workplaces full of computers and double-breasted "suitsers", where everyone has a stiff upper lip. This movie will definitely destroy that myth. Here you will find every man in a suit can tell a different story with soft, pouty lips and other body parts that are stiff.

These well dressed office workers are all men with sexual fantasies about making out with their co-workers and associates during the work day. Not only do they tell on-camera what fantasies they have in mind, but before you know it they are acting them out in explicit detail before your very eyes.

First up is a young worker who has always enjoyed the fantasy of screwing with a bike courier. He cannot resist the sight of a real man in tight spandex with a lean body and a big package in his hands ready for delivery. This guy's dream comes true one noon hour when he fills in for the missing receptionist wearing a T-Shirt emblazoned with the words "F**k me...I'm the receptionist". Obviously a bike courier is the first visitor and the new

receptionist makes him feel very welcome, to which he responds with an invitation to more than just sign for the package.

Other fantasies include two men catching a co-worker in the basement engaged in self-gratification instead of filing. This three-way demonstrates that all foreplay and no work make for a happy day at the office.

Then there's the boss whose idea of an employee reprimand is to bend him over his office desk and give him the shaft. A punishment that this particular employee seems to enjoy immensely.

Craving food, the six staff members whose idea for a lunchtime sandwich is how close they can all squeeze together and what kind of filling is in the middle. One bite is enough to put these guys into ecstasy, but watch out for their insatiable appetites.

Only in England—what a pity! Some may be of the opinion that this kind of work ethic should be exported globally.

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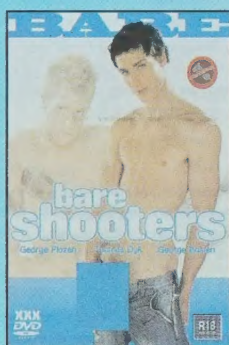
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RATING:

(OUT OF FIVE STARS)

MUSIC: ★★
BODIES: ★★★★★
ACTION: ★★★★★
SETS: ★★
STORY: ★★★★★

Bare Shooters
From: Euro Creme



Featuring: George Basten, Johny Hunter, George Plozen, Mark Zebro, Thomas Pitt, Tony Rogers, Johny Malcon, Herry Luck, Joey Martyn, Paul Jeremy, Thomas Dyk, Tony Koch

Running Time: 110 minutes

As a struggling artist, George Basten loves to paint on his rooftop terrace overlooking the city. For him this is a dream come true. However, his lover, George Plozen, is in charge of selling the paintings and lately there has been no income. Now the two roommates cannot pay the rent and the landlord is threatening eviction.

Desperate times call for desperate measures and Basten decides to borrow money, buy some photographic equipment and set up a small studio to photograph male models. He hopes the photos will sell better than his paintings—of course he's right—and you can understand why after you see the hot young models.

First up on the casting couch are Thomas Pitt and Tony Rogers. The two young photographers are busy setting up their new studio while the two inexperienced models wait on the reception area couch. The first photo shoot takes a long time to set up, and the patient models have plenty of time to get to know each other. Thomas is nervous and he tells Tony that he might not be able to perform in front of the camera. Tony assures him it's not a problem and in fact he is hard and ready for action. Following this

lead, Thomas investigates and finds Tony totally ready for lights, camera and action. They don't wait for a camera, as the couch alone is perfect for a hot practice session.

Each photo shoot is a voyeurs dream. Plozen is photographing Johny Hunter in the bathroom shower, when everything turns steamy. Basten cannot resist a kitchen photo session with Plozen and Thomas Dyk—who has a banana in each hand and one in the middle. After a particularly long studio session five horny young models turn to an orgy for relaxation at the end of the hard work in front of the camera under the hot lights.

It's no wonder the erotic pictures sell very fast and these two lovers no longer have any financial problems or any chance of leading a boring life.

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RATING:

(OUT OF FIVE STARS)

MUSIC: ★★
BODIES: ★★★★★
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